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A LITERARY PARTY AT SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

From a painting by Thomas Doyle — 1849

BOSWELL'S LIFE OF SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

AN ABRIDGMENT

WITH ANNOTATIONS BY THE EMINENT BIOGRAPHERS
AND AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

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To

Dr. CHARLES H. J. DOUGLAS

UNDER WHOSE DIGNIFIED, SCHOLARLY AND

INSPIRING DIRECTION THIS WORK

WAS FIRST PLANNED

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INTRODUCTION

The following abridgment has been prepared with the aim of transferring Boswell's *Life of Samuel Johnson* from the reference shelf to the student's hands, of making it for him something more than "a book to browse on," or a mere adjunct to the essays of Macaulay and Carlyle. The third, or less, of the original here presented is, therefore, not a series of hastily culled "selections." Every sacrifice of Boswell's text has been made with the intention of offending as little as possible those who look upon his work as a touchstone. That the "talk" should remain intact, or nearly so, was the first consideration, otherwise that the original proportions should be preserved. Boswell's freedom from the tyranny of the modern paragraph becomes so conspicuous after abridgment that a feeling for consistency stands with sentiment for retaining some of his antiquated spelling, especially those forms that Dr. Johnson himself favored. Nothing, fortunately, in the life of him who "ever discouraged obscenity and impiety" calls for expurgation, and the editor believes that cautious excision has left for the student most of the significant allusions to men, books, and politics of the time as well as to Johnson's friends, household, publishers, and clubs. Through the courtesy of Messrs. Harper and Brothers it has been possible to refer unstintedly to the magnificent work of Dr. George Birbeck Hill. The foreign phrases, though very simple, have been translated; but general remarks on eighteenth century life and manners, such as are now common in other school classics, and information to be found in the dictionary or ready-reference books has been excluded from the notes; for their theme is Johnson.

Those who have found contact with the mind of Dr. Johnson one of the most fascinating of literary experiences eagerly tell us that it is also one of the most educating of human experiences. Piety, filial honor, a passion for discrimination, an unwillingness to compromise on matters of principle, indomitable personal pride coupled with the sweetest generosity, intolerance of sham and "sets of words," — even the bigotry with which to face the bigotry of the latest cry, — these things made that singularly impressive unity of mind and character. Who else — to use the words of Sir Joshua Reynolds — can so surely as Dr. Johnson clear one's mind of rubbish and teach one to think justly?

For Boswell, of whom something must be said in an *Introduction*, the student should read Carlyle's book on *Heroes* and the correspondence with Temple — if he can find it; but he should be led to see that, as Mr. Mowbray Morris says, "Johnson's attitude to Boswell is at once the best explanation of his character and his worth." Were that attitude borne in mind, there would be less wonder how the "flunky," upon whom far cleverer persons have so grudgingly bestowed their magnanimity, could have written one of the great books of modern days. It but emphasizes the classic truth: Enduring art makes its way by convictions rather than by conciliations. "He would not change his tiger into a cat to please anybody!" How much shrewder, even as a bid for fame, his devotion to one majestic being than the desire to please a host of the second rate! This the lovers of the obvious, of whom Macaulay is the chief, have failed to see. Boswell spared himself even less than he spared his master, and admits the fact with so much sincerity and candor in the Dedication to Sir Joshua Reynolds that one feels ashamed of the easy criticism which could produce: "All the caprices of his temper, all the illusions of his vanity, all the hypochondriac whimsies, all his castles in the air, he displayed with a cool complacency, a perfect unconsciousness that he was making a fool of himself, to which it is impossible to find a parallel in the whole history of mankind." Such an attitude, Edmund Gosse almost too mildly says, indicates "something incomprehensible" in the critic's "capacity." Boswell was not "a man of the meanest and feeblest intellect";

he was, no doubt, sensual and vain, but, fond though he was of a "toot on a new horn," never vulgar. His fame he achieved through Johnson, "but the fact," says Gosse, "has been insisted upon until his own genius and peculiarities have been unduly overlooked." Plainly, all recent criticism is disposed to make amends.

Boswell was born on the family estate of Auchinleck in 1740, schooled in Edinborough, prepared for the law in Glasgow. Events of importance subsequent to his meeting with Johnson in 1763 are mentioned in the *Life*. After Johnson's death he kept a residence in London, maintained a prominent place in the Literary Club, and was made Foreign Secretary of the Royal Academy. He died in London in 1795, and was buried at Auchinleck. His correspondence with Temple was published in 1857, and his Commonplace Book — "Boswelliana" — in 1874.

A BRIEF BIBLIOGRAPHY

OF WORKS CONCERNING DR. JOHNSON

1774. Campbell's *Lexiphanes.*
1781. *The Beauties of Johnson.*
1782. *The Deformities of Johnson.*
1785. *Johnson's Prayers and Meditations*, published by George Strahan.
Boswell's *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides.*
1786. Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes of the late Samuel Johnson During the Last Twenty Years of his Life.*
1787. Sir John Hawkins's *Life of Samuel Johnson.*
1788. Mrs. Piozzi's *Letters to and from the Late Samuel Johnson.*
1791. Boswell's *Life of Samuel Johnson.*
1792. Murphy's *Essay on the Life and Genius of Johnson.*
1793. Second edition of Boswell's *Life.*
Merry's *Witticisms, Anecdotes, Jests etc. of Dr. Johnson.*
1794. Boswell's supplementary volume.
1798. *Dr. Johnson's Table Talk.*
1799. Malone's third edition of Boswell's *Life.*
1804. Malone's fourth edition of Boswell's *Life.*
1805. Phillips's edition of *Johnson's Account of his Life from Birth to his Eleventh Year, with Letters to Miss Hill Boothby.*
1831. Croker's edition of Boswell's *Life.*
Macaulay's *Essay on Boswell's Life of Samuel Johnson.*
1832. Carlyle's *Boswell's Life of Samuel Johnson* in *Frazer's Magazine.*
1841. (Printed) Carlyle's *The Hero as Man of Letters.*
1854. The Reverend Thomas Campbell's *Diary of a Visit to England.*

1856. Macaulay's *Life of Samuel Johnson.*
1857. *Boswell's Correspondence with the Rev. Mr. Temple.*
1859. (Under Macaulay's supervision.) An article in *Edinburg Review* on Campbell's *Diary.*
1878. Dr. Hill's *Dr. Johnson, his Friends and his Critics.*
1878. Leslie Stephens's *Johnson.* (*English Men of Letters Series.*)
1879. Mason's *Samuel Johnson, his Words and his Ways.*
1884. Reverend Alexander Napier's edition of Boswell's *Life.*
1887. Dr. Hill's edition of Boswell's *Life.*
1888. Dr. Hill's *Wit and Wisdom of Samuel Johnson.*
1892. Dr. Hill's *Letters of Samuel Johnson.*
1897. Dr. Hill's *Johnsonian Miscellanies.*
1898. Austin Dobson's (in *Eighteenth Century Vignettes*) *A Garret in Gough Square,* and *Boswell's Predecessors and Editors.*
1905. Augustine Birrell's *The Johnsonian Legend.*
1907. Clement K. Shorter's *Immortal Memories.*
1910. Walter Raleigh's *Six Essays on Johnson.*
A. M. Broadley's *Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Thrale* with *The Unpublished Journal of the Tour in Wales and Correspondence of the Streatham Circle.*
1911. Tinker's *Dr. Johnson and Fanny Burney.*
1911. Alice Meynell and G. K. Chesterton's *Johnson.* (Selections from Johnson's prose, poetry, letters, etc. One volume.)
1909. Aleyn Lyell Reade's *Johnsonian Gleanings.*
No. I, *Dr. Johnson's Ancestors.*
1912. No. II, *Francis Barber, Dr. Johnson's Negro Servant.*
No. III will deal with Johnson's early life.
1913. Thraliana: by Mr. Salusbury, a descendant of Mrs. Thrale's family.
1913. Bailey's *Dr. Johnson and his Circle.* (*Home University Library.*)

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

OF

JOHNSON'S LIFE AND CONTEMPORARY EVENTS

1709–1784

1709	Johnson born Sept. 18	The *Tatler*, No. I, Prior's Poems	
1710			Trial of Sacheverell
1711		Pope's *Essay on Criticism*, The *Spectator* No. I	Hume born
1712	Johnson "touched" by Queen Anne	Pope's *Rape of the Lock*, Gay's *Trivia*	
1713		Addison's *Cato*	Sterne born
1714			Accession of George I
1715		Pope's translation of the *Iliad*, Vol. I	
1716			Gray and Garrick born
1717	Johnson sent to Lichfield Grammar school	Newton's *Principia*	Horace Walpole born
1719		Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, Part I	Addison died
1720			"South Sea Bubble"
1721			Smollett, Collins, and Prior born
1723		Pope's *Odyssey*	Adam Smith born, Reynolds born

1724		Allan Ramsay's *Evergreen* and *Tea Table Miscellany*	
1725	Johnson sent to Stourbridge School	Allan Ramsay's *Gentle Shepherd*	
1726		Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* and Thomson's *Winter*	
1727		Gay's *Fables*	Accession of George II. Sir Isaac Newton died
1728	Johnson entered Pembroke College, Oxford	Pope's *Dunciad*	Goldsmith born
1729	Johnson left Oxford without a degree		Burke born, Steele and Congreve died
1731	Johnson's father died	The *Gentleman's Magazine*, No. I	Croker and Churchill born, Defoe died
1732	Johnson an usher at Market Bosworth	Pope's *Essay on Man*. Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanac*	Gay died
1735	Johnson's marriage to Mrs. Porter. Publication of Lobo's *Voyage to Abyssinia*		Rob Roy died
1736	Johnson set up a private academy at Edial. Wrote *Irene*		
1737	Johnson and Garrick set out for London		Gibbon born

1738	Johnson becomes a regular contributor to the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Publishes *London*		Macpherson born. The first of the London Methodists
1739		Hume's *Treatise Of Human Nature*	Mrs. Thrale born
1740–1743	Johnson writes Parliamentary Reports	Richardson's *Pamela*	Boswell born
1741 1742		Haendel's *Messiah*, Fielding's *Joseph Andrews*, Young's *Night Thoughts*, Shenstone's *Schoolmistress*	
1744	Johnson's *Life of Savage*	Akenside's *Pleasures of the Imagination*	Pope died
1745			Swift died. Jacobite Rebellion
1747	Johnson's *Plan for a Dictionary of the English Language* addressed to Lord Chesterfield	Gray's *Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College*, Collins's *Odes*	
1748		Richardson's *Clarissa Harlowe*, Smollett's *Roderick Random*, Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*	Thomson died

1749	Johnson's *Vanity of Human Wishes*, *Irene*, produced by Garrick at Drury Lane	Fielding's *Tom Jones*	Charles Fox born
1750	Johnson's *Rambler*, No. 1		
1751		Gray's *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*	R. B. Sheridan born
1752	Mrs. Johnson dies. The *Rambler* is discontinued		Frances Burney and Chatterton born
1753	Johnson contributes to Hawkesworth's *Adventurer*		
1754		Hume's *History of England*	Fielding died. Crabbe born
1755	Johnson receives degree of M.A. from Oxford. Published *Dictionary of the English Language*		The "Lisbon Earthquake"
1756	Johnson contributes to the *Literary Magazine*	Burke's *Vindication of Natural Society*, Essay *On Sublime and Beautiful*, Gray's *Odes*	Blake born
1757	Johnson begins the *Idler*	Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*	Allan Ramsay died
1758	Johnson's *Rasselas*. His mother dies	Robertson's History of England	Burns born.
1759			Pitt born

1760	Boswell's first visit to London	Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World*	Accession of George III
1761		Churchill's *Rosciad*	Richardson died
1762	Johnson pensioned £300 a year	Macpherson's *Ossian*	Lady Montagu died
1763	Johnson and Boswell meet	Lady Montagu's *Letters*, Smart's *Song to David*	
1764	The *Literary Club* founded	Goldsmith's *Traveller*, Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*, Chatterton's *Elinour and Juga*	Hogarth died
1765	Johnson receives degree of LL.D. from Trinity College, Dublin. Publishes his edition of Shakespeare. Meets the Thrales	Percy's *Reliques of Ancient Poetry*	Stamp Act. Young died. Steam engine invented
1766		Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield*	Repeal of Stamp Act
1767	Johnson's conversation with George III		Maria Edgeworth born
1768		Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*, Goldsmith's *Good-Natured Man*, Gray's Poems. Boswell's *Account of Corsica*	Sterne died

1769		The first *Letters of Junius*, Robertson's *History of Charles V*, Burke's *Observations on the Present State of the Nation*	Napoleon and Wellington born
1770	Johnson's *False Alarm*	Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*, Burke's *Thoughts on the Present Discontents*	Wordsworth born. Chatterton died
1771		Smollett's *Humphrey Clinker*, Beattie's *Minstrel*	Walter Scott born. Gray died. Smollett died
1772		Sir Joshua Reynolds's *Discourses*	Coleridge born. Swedenborg died
1773	Johnson visits Scotland with Boswell	Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*. Fergusson's Poems	"Boston Tea Party"
1774	Johnson visits Wales with Mr. and Mrs. Thrale	Burke's Speech on American Taxation, Chesterfield's *Letters to his Son*, Warton's *History of English Poetry*, I	Southern born. Goldsmith died
1775	Johnson receives the degree of D.C.L. from Oxford. Publishes *Taxation no Tyranny* and	Burke's Speech on Conciliation with America, Sheridan's *Rivals*	Jane Austen born. Landor born. Lamb born. Bunker Hill

	Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland. He visits France with Mr. and Mrs. Thrale		
1776		Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, I. Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*	Hume died. Declaration of Independence
1777		Sheridan's *School for Scandal*, Robertson's *History of America*	Campbell born. Burgoyne's surrender
1778		Frances Burney's *Evelina*	Hazlitt born. Hallam born. Voltaire died. Chatham died
1779	Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*, first four volumes		Garrick died
1780		The Gordon Riots	
1781	Johnson completes the *Lives of the Poets*. Mr. Thrale dies		
1782		Frances Burney's *Cecilia*	Webster born
1783	Johnson stricken by paralysis. He founds a new club at the Essex Head	Crabbe's *Village*, Blake's *Poetical Sketches*	Irving born. Peace with America

1784	Johnson's friends attempt to raise a fund which shall pay for a comfortable winter in Italy. Johnson visits Lichfield, Ashbourne, and Oxford. He dies at Bolt Court December 13		

BOSWELL'S LIFE OF SAMUEL JOHNSON

THE LIFE OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

To write the Life of him who excelled all mankind in writing the lives of others, and who, whether we consider his extraordinary endowments, or his various works, has been equalled by few in any age, is an arduous, and may be reckoned in me a presumptuous task.

Had Dr. Johnson written his own Life, in conformity with the opinion which he has given,° that every man's life may be best written by himself; had he employed in the preservation of his own history, that clearness of narration and elegance of language in which he has embalmed so many eminent persons, the world would probably have had the most perfect example of biography that was ever exhibited. But although he at different times, in a desultory manner, committed to writing many particulars of the progress of his mind and fortunes, he never had persevering diligence enough to form them into a regular composition. Of these memorials a few have been preserved; but the greater part was consigned by him to the flames, a few days before his death.

As I had the honour and happiness of enjoying his friendship for upwards of twenty years; as I had the scheme of writing his life constantly in view; as he was well apprised of this circumstance, and from time to time obligingly satisfied my enquiries, by communicating to me the incidents of his early years; as I was very assiduous in recording his conversation, of which the extraordinary vigour and vivacity constituted one of the first features of his character; and as I have spared no pains in obtaining materials concerning

him, and have been favoured with the most liberal communications by his friends; I flatter myself that few biographers have entered upon such a work as this, with more advantages, independent of literary abilities, in which I am not vain enough to compare myself with some great names who have gone before me in this kind of writing.

Instead of melting down my materials into one mass, wherever narrative is necessary to explain, connect, and supply, I furnish it; but in the chronological series of Johnson's life, I produce his own minutes, letters, or conversation, being convinced that this mode is more lively. There is here an accumulation of intelligence from various points, by which his character is more fully understood and illustrated.

And he will be seen as he really was; for I profess to write, not his panegyrick, which must be all praise, but his Life; which, great and good as he was, must not be supposed to be entirely perfect.

What I consider as the peculiar value of the following work is the quantity it contains of Johnson's conversation; which is universally acknowledged to have been eminently instructive and entertaining.

That the conversation of a celebrated man, if his talents have been exerted in conversation, will best display his character, is well established in the judgement of mankind. If authority be required, let us appeal to Plutarch, the prince of ancient biographers. "Nor is it always in the most distinguished achievements that men's virtues or vices may be best discerned; but very often an action of small note, a short saying, or a jest, shall distinguish a person's real character more than the greatest sieges, or the most important battles."

To this may be added the sentiments of the very man whose life I am about to exhibit. "The business of the biographer is often to pass slightly over those performances and incidents which produce vulgar greatness, to lead the thoughts into domestick privacies, and display the minute details of daily life, where exteriour appendages are cast aside, and men excel each other only by prudence and by virtue.

"All the plans and enterprises of De Witt are now of less importance to the world than that part of his personal character, which represents him as careful of his health, and negligent of his life.

"But biography has often been allotted to writers, who imagine themselves writing a life, when they exhibit a chronological series of actions or preferments. More knowledge may be gained of a man's real character, by a short conversation with one of his servants, than from a formal and studied narrative, begun with his pedigree, and ended with his funeral.

"We know how few can pourtray a living acquaintance, except by his most prominent and observable particularities, and the grosser features of his mind; and it may be easily imagined how much of this little knowledge may be lost in imparting it, and how soon a succession of copies will lose all resemblance of the original."°

Having said thus much by way of introduction, I commit the following pages to the candour of the Publick.

Samuel Johnson was born at Lichfield, in Staffordshire, on the 18th of September, 1709; and his baptism is recorded on the day of his birth. His father was Michael Johnson, a native of Derbyshire, of obscure extraction, who settled in Lichfield as a bookseller and stationer. His mother was Sarah Ford, descended of an ancient race of substantial yeomanry in Warwickshire. They were well advanced in years when they married, and never had more than two children, both sons; Samuel and Nathanael, who died in his twenty-fifth year.

At that time booksellers' shops in the provincial towns of England were very rare, so that there was not one even in Birmingham, in which town old Mr. Johnson used to open a shop every market-day.°

Johnson's mother was a woman of distinguished understanding.° To her must be ascribed early impressions of religion upon the mind of her son. He told me, that he remembered distinctly having had the first notice of Heaven,

"a place to which good people went," and hell, "a place to which bad people went," communicated to him by her, when a little child in bed with her; and that it might be the better fixed in his memory, she sent him to repeat it to Thomas Jackson, their man-servant.

There is a traditional story of the infant Hercules of toryism, so curiously characteristick, that I shall not withhold it:—

"When Dr. Sacheverel was at Lichfield, Johnson was not quite three years old. Mr. Hammond observing him at the cathedral perched upon his father's shoulders, listening and gaping at the much celebrated preacher, asked Mr. Johnson how he could possibly think of bringing such an infant to church, and in the midst of so great a crowd. He answered, because it was impossible to keep him at home; for, young as he was, he believed he had caught the publick spirit and zeal for Sacheverel, and would have staid for ever in the church, satisfied with beholding him."

One day, when the servant who used to be sent to school to conduct him home, had not come in time, he set out by himself, though he was then so near-sighted, that he was obliged to stoop down on his hands and knees to take a view of the kennel * before he ventured to step over it. His schoolmistress, afraid that he might miss his way, or fall into the kennel, or be run over by a cart, followed him at some distance. He happened to turn about and perceive her. Feeling her careful attention as an insult to his manliness, he ran back to her in a rage, and beat her, as well as his strength would permit.

For the power of his memory he was all his life eminent to a degree almost incredible. When he was a child in petticoats, and had learnt to read, Mrs. Johnson one morning put the common prayer-book into his hands, pointed to the collect for the day, and said, "Sam, you must get this by heart." She went up stairs, leaving him to study it: but by the time she had reached the second floor, she heard him following her. "What's the matter?" said she. "I can say it," he

replied; and repeated it distinctly, though he could not have read it more than twice.

Another story of his infant precocity I am to refute upon his own authority. It is told, that, when a child of three years old, he chanced to tread upon a duckling, the eleventh of a brood, and killed it; upon which, he dictated to his mother the following epitaph: —

> "Here lies good master duck,
> Whom Samuel Johnson trod on;
> If it had liv'd, it had been *good luck*,
> For then we'd had an *odd one*."

His mother, yielding to the superstitious notion as to the virtue of the regal touch, carried him to London, where he was touched by Queen Anne.° Being asked if he could remember Queen Anne, — "He had (he said) a confused, but somehow a sort of solemn recollection of a lady in diamonds and a long black hood."

He was first taught to read English by Dame Oliver, a widow, who kept a school for young children in Lichfield. He told me she could read the black letter, and asked him to borrow for her, from his father, a bible in that character. When he was going to Oxford, she brought him, in the simplicity of her kindness, a present of gingerbread, and said he was the best scholar she ever had. He delighted in mentioning this early compliment: adding, with smile, that "this was as high a proof of his merit as he could conceive."

He began to learn Latin with Mr. Hawkins, usher, or undermaster of Lichfield school, "a man (said he) very skilful in his little way." Mr. Hunter, the headmaster, according to his account, "was very severe, and wrong-headedly severe. He did not distinguish between ignorance and negligence: for he would beat a boy equally for not knowing a thing, as for neglecting to know it. For instance, he would call up a boy and ask him Latin for a candlestick, which the boy could not expect to be asked. Now, Sir, if a boy could answer every question, there would be no need of a master to teach him."

Mr. Langton asked him how he had acquired so accurate a knowledge of Latin, in which, I believe, he was exceeded by no man of his time; he said, "My master whipt me very well. Without that, Sir, I should have done nothing." While Hunter was flogging his boys unmercifully, he used to say, "And this I do to save you from the gallows." Johnson, upon all occasions, expressed his approbation of enforcing instruction by means of the rod. "A child is afraid of being whipped, and gets his task, and there's an end on't; whereas, by exciting emulation and comparisons of superiority, you make brothers and sisters hate each other."

When Johnson saw some young ladies in Lincolnshire who were remarkably well behaved, owing to their mother's strict discipline and severe correction, he exclaimed, in one of Shakespeare's lines a little varied,°

"*Rod*, I will honour thee for this thy duty."

Johnson did not strut or stand on tip-toe; he only did not stoop. He was from the beginning, Ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν, a king of men. His schoolfellow, Mr. Hector, has assured me that he never knew him corrected at school, but for talking and diverting other boys from their business. He seemed to learn by intuition; for though indolence and procrastination were inherent in his constitution, whenever he made an exertion he did more than any one else.

Johnson was, at the age of fifteen, removed to the school of Stourbridge, in Worcestershire. He thus discriminated his progress at his two grammar-schools. "At one, I learned much in the school, but little from the master; in the other, I learned much from the master, but little in the school."

The two years which he spent at home, after his return from Stourbridge, he passed in what he thought idleness, and was scolded by his father for his want of steady application. He used to mention one curious instance of his casual reading, when but a boy. Having imagined that his brother had hid some apples behind a large folio upon an upper shelf in his father's shop, he climbed up to search for them. There were no apples; but the large folio proved to be Petrarch, whom he

had seen mentioned, in some preface, as one of the restorers of learning. His curiosity having been thus excited, he sat down with avidity, and read a great part of the book. What he read during these two years, he told me, was not works of mere amusement, "not voyages and travels, but all literature, Sir, all ancient writers, all manly: though but little Greek, only some of Anacreon and Hesiod: but in this irregular manner (added he) I had looked into a great many books, which were not commonly known at the Universities, where they seldom read any books but what are put into their hands by their tutors; so that when I came to Oxford, Dr. Adams, now master of Pembroke College, told me, I was the best qualified for the University that he had ever known come there."

The Reverend Dr. Adams gave me some account of what passed on the night of Johnson's arrival at Oxford. His father, who had anxiously accompanied him, found means to have him introduced to Mr. Jorden, who was to be his tutor. His father seemed very full of the merits of his son, and told the company he was a good scholar, and a poet, and wrote Latin verses. His figure and manner appeared strange to them; but he behaved modestly, and sat silent, till upon something which occurred in the course of conversation, he suddenly struck in and quoted Macrobius.

Mr. Jorden "was a very worthy man, but a heavy man, and I did not profit much by his instructions. Indeed, I did not attend him much. The first day after I came to college, I waited upon him, and then staid away four. On the sixth, Mr. Jorden asked me why I had not attended. I answered, I had been sliding in Christ-Church meadow. And this I said with as much *nonchalance* as I am now talking to you. I had no notion that I was wrong or irreverent to my tutor." BOSWELL. "That, Sir, was great fortitude of mind." JOHNSON. "No, Sir, stark insensibility." ° He had a love and respect for Jorden, not for his literature, but for his worth. "Whenever (said he) a young man becomes Jorden's pupil, he becomes his son."

While he was at Lichfield, in the college vacation of the year 1729, he felt himself overwhelmed with an horrible hypochondria,° with perpetual irritation, fretfulness, and impatience; and with a dejection, gloom, and despair, which made existence misery.

"Sunday (said he) was a heavy day to me when I was a boy. My mother confined me on that day, and made me read 'The Whole Duty of Man,'° from a great part of which I could derive no instruction. When, for instance, I had read the chapter on theft, which from my infancy I had been taught was wrong, I was no more convinced that theft was wrong than before; so there was no accession of knowledge. A boy should be introduced to such books by having his attention directed to the arrangement, to the style, and other excellencies of composition; that the mind being thus engaged by an amusing variety of objects may not grow weary."

"I fell into an inattention to religion, or an indifference about it, in my ninth year. The church at Lichfield, in which we had a seat, wanted reparation, so I was to go and find a seat in other churches; and having bad eyes, and being awkward about this, I used to go and read in the fields on Sunday. This habit continued till my fourteenth year; I then became a sort of lax *talker* against religion, for I did not much *think* against it; and this lasted till I went to Oxford, where it would not be *suffered*. When at Oxford, I took up Law's 'Serious Call to a Holy Life,' expecting to find it a dull book, (as such books generally are), and perhaps to laugh at it. But I found Law quite an overmatch for me; and this was the first occasion of my thinking in earnest of religion." From this time forward religion was the predominant object of his thoughts.

He told me, that from his earliest years he loved to read poetry, but hardly ever read any poem to an end; that he read Shakspeare at a period so early, that the speech of the Ghost in Hamlet terrified him when he was alone; that Horace's Odes were the compositions in which he took most

delight, and it was long before he liked his Epistles and Satires. He told me what he read *solidly* at Oxford was Greek; not the Grecian historians, but Homer and Euripides and now and then a little Epigram; that the study of which he was the most fond was Metaphysicks.

His apartment in Pembroke College was that upon the second floor over the gateway. The enthusiast of learning will ever contemplate it with veneration. One day, while he was sitting in it quite alone, the master of the College overheard him uttering this soliloquy in his strong emphatick voice: "Well, I have a mind to see what is done in other places of learning. I'll go and visit the Universities abroad. I'll go to France and Italy. I'll go to Padua. And I'll mind my business. For an *Athenian* blockhead is the worst of all blockheads."

He was then depressed by poverty, and irritated by disease. "Ah, Sir, I was mad and violent. It was bitterness which they mistook for frolick. I was miserably poor, and I thought to fight my way by my literature and my wit: so I disregarded all power and all authority."

I have heard from some of his contemporaries that he was generally seen lounging at the College gate, with a circle of young students round him, whom he was entertaining with wit, and keeping from their studies, if not spiriting them up to rebellion against the College discipline, which in his maturer years he so much extolled.

He very early began a diary of his life. *Oct.* 1729. "*Desidiæ valedixi; syrenis istius cantibus surdam posthac aurem obversurus.* – I bid farewell to Sloth, being resolved henceforth not to listen to her syren strains."

Johnson was peculiarly happy in mentioning how many of the sons of Pembroke were poets; adding, with a smile of sportive triumph, "Sir, we are a nest of singing birds." He was not, however, blind to what he thought the defects of his own college. Taylor had obtained his father's consent to be entered of Pembroke, that he might be with his schoolfellow. This would have been a great comfort to Johnson.

But he fairly told Taylor that he could not, in conscience, suffer him to enter where he knew he could not have an able tutor. He then made enquiry all round the University, and having found that Mr. Bateman, of Christ-Church, was the tutor of highest reputation, Taylor was entered of that College. Mr. Bateman's lectures were so excellent, that Johnson used to come and get them at second-hand from Taylor, till his poverty being so extreme, that his shoes were worn out, and his feet appeared through them, he saw that this humiliating circumstance was perceived by the Christ-Church men, and he came no more. He was too proud to accept of money, and somebody having set a pair of new shoes at his door, he threw them away with indignation.

Dr. Adams paid Johnson this high compliment. "I was his nominal tutor; but he was above my mark." When I repeated it to Johnson, his eyes flashed with grateful satisfaction, and he exclaimed, "That was liberal and noble."

The state of poverty in which his father died, appears from a note in one of Johnson's little diaries. "I layed by eleven guineas on this day, when I received twenty pounds, being all that I have reason to hope for out of my father's effects, previous to the death of my mother: an event which I pray God may be very remote. I now therefore see that I must make my own fortune. Meanwhile, let me take care that the powers of my mind be not debilitated by poverty, and that indigence do not force me into any criminal act."

Johnson was so far fortunate, that the respectable character of his parents, and his own merit, had, from his earliest years, secured him a kind reception in the best families at Lichfield. Among these were Dr. Swinfen, Captain Garrick, and Mr. Gilbert Walmsley, Registrar of the Ecclesiastical Court of Lichfield. In these families he was in the company of ladies, particularly at Mr. Walmsley's, whose wife and sisters-in-law, of the name of Aston,° and daughters of a Baronet, were remarkable for good breeding; so that the notion which has been industriously circulated and believed,

that he never was in good company till late in life, is wholly without foundation.

In the forlorn state of his circumstances, he accepted of an offer to be employed as usher in the school of Market-Bosworth, in Leicestershire. This employment was very irksome to him in every respect. Mr. Hector recollects his writing "that the poet had described the dull sameness of his existence in these words, '*Vitam continet una dies*' (one day contains the whole of my life); that it was unvaried as the note of the cuckoo; and that he did not know whether it was more disagreeable for him to teach, or the boys to learn, the grammar rules."

He was invited by Mr. Hector to pass some time at Birmingham. Mr. Warren, the first established bookseller in Birmingham, was very attentive to Johnson, who he soon found could be of much service to him in his trade, by his knowledge of literature and in furnishing some numbers of a periodical Essay printed in the newspaper, of which Warren was the proprietor. He made some valuable acquaintances there, amongst whom were Mr. Porter, a mercer, whose widow he afterwards married.°

Having mentioned that he had read at Pembroke College a Voyage to Abyssinia, by Lobo, a Portuguese Jesuit, and that he thought an abridgement and translation of it from the French into English might be an useful and profitable publication, Mr. Warren and Mr. Hector joined in urging him to undertake it. He accordingly agreed; but his constitutional indolence soon prevailed, and the work was at a stand. Mr. Hector, who knew that a motive of humanity would be the most prevailing argument with his friend, went to Johnson, and represented to him, that the printer could have no other employment till this undertaking was finished, and that the poor man and his family were suffering. Johnson upon this exerted the powers of his mind, though his body was relaxed. He lay in bed with the book, which was a quarto, before him, and dictated while Hector wrote.

He published proposals for printing by subscription the

Latin Poems of Politian. There were not subscribers enough to insure a sufficient sale; so the work never appeared.

Miss Porter told me, that when he was first introduced to her mother, his appearance was very forbidding: he was then lean and lank, so that his immense structure of bones was hideously striking to the eye, and the scars of the scrophula were deeply visible. He also wore his hair, which was straight and stiff, and separated behind; and he often had, seemingly, convulsive starts and odd gesticulations, which tended to excite at once surprise and ridicule. Mrs. Porter was so much engaged by his conversation that she overlooked all these external disadvantages, and said to her daughter, "This is the most sensible man that I ever saw in my life." Though Mrs. Porter was double the age of Johnson, and her person and manner, as described to me by the late Mr. Garrick, were by no means pleasing to others, she must have had a superiority of understanding and talents, as she certainly inspired him with a more than ordinary passion. He went to Lichfield to ask his mother's consent to the marriage; which he could not but be conscious was a very imprudent scheme, both on account of their disparity of years, and her want of fortune. But Mrs. Johnson knew too well the ardour of her son's temper, and was too tender a parent to oppose his inclinations.

"Sir, it was a love marriage on both sides." I have had from my illustrious friend the following curious account of their journey to church upon the nuptial morn: — "Sir, she had read the old romances, and had got into her head the fantastical notion that a woman of spirit should use her lover like a dog. So, Sir, at first she told me that I rode too fast, and she could not keep up with me: and, when I rode a little slower, she passed me, and complained that I lagged behind. I was not to be made the slave of caprice; and I resolved to begin as I meant to end. I therefore pushed on briskly, till I was fairly out of her sight. The road lay between two hedges, so I was sure she could not miss it; and I contrived

that she should soon come up with me. When she did, I observed her to be in tears."

He now set up a private academy, for which purpose he hired a large house. In the Gentleman's Magazine for 1736, there is the following advertisement: "At Edial, near Lichfield, in Staffordshire, young gentlemen are boarded and taught the Latin and Greek Languages, by SAMUEL JOHNSON." But the only pupils that were put under his care were the celebrated David Garrick and his brother George, and a Mr. Offely. The truth is, that he was not so well qualified for being a teacher of elements, and a conductor in learning by regular gradations, as men of inferiour powers of mind. His own acquisitions had been made by fits and starts, by violent irruptions into the regions of knowledge; and it could not be expected that his impatience would be subdued, and his impetuosity restrained, so as to fit him for a quiet guide to novices.°

From Mr. Garrick's account he did not appear to have been profoundly reverenced by his pupils. His oddities of manner, and uncouth gesticulations, could not but be the subject of merriment to them; and in particular, the young rogues used to listen and peep through the key-hole, that they might turn into ridicule his tumultuous and awkward fondness for Mrs. Johnson, whom he used to name by the familiar appellation of *Tetty* or *Tetsey*, which, like *Betty* or *Betsey*, is provincially used as a contraction for *Elizabeth*. I have seen Garrick exhibit her, by his exquisite talent of mimickry, so as to excite the heartiest bursts of laughter.

Johnson now thought of trying his fortune in London. David Garrick went thither at the same time, with intent to follow the profession of the law, from which he was soon diverted by his decided preference for the stage.°

He had a little money when he came to town, and he knew how he could live in the cheapest manner. "I dined (said he) very well for eight-pence, with very good company, at the Pine-Apple in New-street, just by. Several of them had travelled. They expected to meet every day; but did not

know one another's names. It used to cost the rest a shilling, for they drank wine; but I had a cut of meat for six-pence, and bread for a penny, and gave the waiter a penny; so that I was quite well served, nay, better than the rest, for they gave the waiter nothing." His Ofellus in the *Art of Living in London*, I have heard him relate, was an Irish painter, whom he knew at Birmingham. "He said a man might live in a garret at eighteen-pence a week; few people would inquire where he lodged; and if they did, it was easy to say, 'Sir, I am to be found at such a place.' By spending three-pence in a coffee-house, he might be for some hours every day in very good company; he might dine for six-pence, breakfast on bread and milk for a penny, and do without supper. On *clean-shirt-day* he went abroad, and paid visits."

Amidst this cold obscurity, there was one brilliant circumstance to cheer him; he was well acquainted with Mr. Henry Hervey,° who had at this time a house in London, where Johnson had an opportunity of meeting genteel company. He described this early friend, "Harry Hervey," thus: "He was a vicious man, but very kind to me. If you call a dog Hervey, I shall love him."

He had now written only three acts of his Irene, and retired for some time to lodgings at Greenwich, where he used to compose, walking in the Park. His tragedy was slowly and painfully elaborated. A few days before his death, while burning a great mass of papers, he picked out from among them the original unformed sketch of this tragedy, in his own handwriting, and gave it to Mr. Langton. The King having graciously accepted of this manuscript as a literary curiosity, the volume is deposited in the King's library.

He related to me the following minute anecdote of this period: "In the last age, when my mother lived in London, there were two sets of people, those who gave the wall, and those who took it; the peaceable and the quarrelsome. When I returned to Lichfield, my mother asked me, whether I was one of those who gave the wall, or those who took it.

Now it is fixed that every man keeps to the right; or, if one is taking the wall, another yields it; and it is never a dispute."

His tragedy being by this time, as he thought, completely finished and fit for the stage, Mr. Peter Garrick told me, that Johnson and he went together to the Fountain Tavern, and read it over, and that he afterwards solicited Mr. Fleetwood, the patentee of Drury-lane theatre, to have it acted at his house; but Mr. Fleetwood would not accept it, probably because it was not patronized by some man of high rank; and it was not acted till 1749, when his friend David Garrick was manager of that theatre.

The GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, begun and carried on by Mr. Edward Cave, under the name of SYLVANUS URBAN, had attracted the notice and esteem of Johnson, in an eminent degree, before he came to London as an adventurer in literature. He told me, that when he first saw St. John's Gate, the place where that deservedly popular miscellany was originally printed, he "beheld it with reverence."

His first performance in the Gentleman's Magazine,° was a copy of Latin verses, in March 1738, addressed to the editor in so happy a style of compliment, that Cave must have been destitute both of taste and sensibility, had he not felt himself highly gratified.

He was now enlisted by Mr. Cave as a regular coadjutor in his magazine, by which he probably obtained a tolerable livelihood. What we certainly know to have been done by him was the Debates in both houses of Parliament, under the name of "The Senate of Lilliput," sometimes with feigned denominations of the several speakers, sometimes with denominations formed of the letters of their real names, in the manner of what is called anagram, so that they might easily be decyphered. Parliament then kept the press in a kind of mysterious awe, which made it necessary to have recourse to such devices. The speeches were enriched by the accession of Johnson's genius, from the scanty notes furnished by persons employed to attend in both houses of Parliament. Sometimes he had nothing more communicated to him than

the names of the several speakers, and the part which they had taken in the debate.

But what first displayed his transcendent powers, and "gave the world assurance of the MAN," was his "LONDON, a Poem, in Imitation of the Third Satire of Juvenal."

To MR. CAVE.

"Having the inclosed poem in my hands to dispose of for the benefit of the authour (of whose abilities I shall say nothing, since I send you his performance), I cannot help taking notice, that besides what the authour may hope for on account of his abilities, he has likewise another claim to your regard, as he lies at present under very disadvantageous circumstances of fortune. SAM. JOHNSON."

Mr. Robert Dodsley had taste enough to perceive its uncommon merit, and gave Johnson ten guineas, who told me, "I might perhaps have accepted of less; but that Paul Whitehead had a little before got ten guineas for a poem; and I would not take less than Paul Whitehead."

Johnson's "London" was published in May, 1738; and it is remarkable that it came out on the same morning with Pope's satire, entitled "1738." POPE, who then filled the poetical throne without a rival, must have been particularly struck by the sudden appearance of such a poet. Informed that his name was Johnson, and that he was some obscure man, Pope said, "He will soon be *déterré*."

The nation was then in that ferment against the Court and the Ministry, which some years after ended in the downfall of Sir Robert Walpole. Accordingly we find in Johnson's "London" the most spirited invectives against tyranny and oppression, the warmest predilection for his own country, and the purest love of virtue; interspersed with traits of his own particular character and situation, not omitting his prejudices as a "true-born Englishman."

"Quick let us rise, the happy seats explore,
And bear Oppression's insolence no more."

"How, when competitors like these contend,
Can *surly Virtue* hope to find a friend?"

"This mournful truth is every where confess'd,
SLOW RISES WORTH, BY POVERTY DEPRESS'D!"

An offer being made to him of the mastership of a school, provided he could obtain the degree of Master of Arts, Dr. Adams was applied to, to know whether that could be granted him as a favour from the University of Oxford. But it was then thought too great a favour to be asked.

Pope, without any knowledge of him but from his "London," recommended him to Earl Gower, who endeavoured to procure for him a degree from Dublin,° by a letter to a friend of Dean Swift. It was, perhaps, no small disappointment to Johnson that this respectable application had not the desired effect. He applied to Dr. Adams, to consult Dr. Smalebroke of the Commons, whether a person might be permitted to practise as an advocate there, without a doctor's degree in Civil Law. He who could display eloquence and wit in defence of the decision of the House of Commons upon Mr. Wilkes's election for Middlesex, and of the unconstitutional taxation of our fellow-subjects in America, must have been a powerful advocate° in any cause. But here, also, the want of a degree was an insurmountable bar.

Johnson's last quoted letter to Mr. Cave concludes with a fair confession that he had not a dinner.° Though in this state of want himself, his benevolent heart was not insensible to the necessities of an humble labourer in literature.

To MR. CAVE.

"You may remember I have formerly talked with you about a Military Dictionary. Mr. Macbean has very good materials for such a work, which I have seen, and will do it at a very low rate. SAM. JOHNSON."

In "Marmor Norfolciense; or an Essay on an ancient prophetical Inscription, in monkish Rhyme, lately discovered

near Lynne in Norfolk, by PROBUS BRITANNICUS," he, in a feigned inscription, supposed to have been found in Norfolk, the country of Sir Robert Walpole, the obnoxious prime minister, inveighs against the Brunswick succession, and the measures of government consequent upon it. To this supposed prophecy he added a Commentary, making each expression apply to the times, with warm Anti-Hanoverian zeal.

"Marmor Norfolciense" became exceedingly scarce, so that I for many years endeavoured in vain to procure a copy of it. At last I was indebted to the malice of one of Johnson's numerous petty adversaries, who, in 1775, published a new edition of it, "with Notes and a Dedication to SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D. by TRIBUNUS;" in which some puny scribbler invidiously attempted to found upon it a charge of inconsistency against its author, because he had accepted of a pension. He looked at it and laughed, and seemed to be much diverted with the feeble efforts of his unknown adversary, who, I hope, is alive to read this account. "Now (said he) here is somebody who thinks he has vexed me sadly; yet, if it had not been for you, you rogue, I should probably never have seen it."

Mr. Pope's note concerning Johnson justifies Swift's epithet of "paper-sparing Pope," [c] for it is written on a slip no larger than a common message-card:

"This is imitated by one Johnson who put in for a Publick-school in Shropshire, but was disappointed. He has an infirmity of the convulsive kind, that attacks him sometimes, so as to make Him a sad Spectacle. Mr. P. from the Merit of This Work which was all the knowledge he had of Him endeavour'd to serve Him without his own application; & wrote to my L[d] gore, but he did not succeed. Mr. Johnson published afterw[ds] another Poem in Latin with Notes the whole very Humerous call'd the Norfolk Prophecy. P."

When Sir Joshua observed to Johnson that he seemed very desirous to see Pope's note, he answered, "Who would not be proud to have such a man as Pope so solicitous in enquiring about him?"

Sir Joshua Reynolds, however, said: "Those motions or tricks of Dr. Johnson are improperly called convulsions. He could sit motionless, when he was told so to do, as well as any other man. My opinion is, that it proceeded from a habit ° which he had indulged himself in, of accompanying his thoughts with certain untoward actions, and those actions always appeared to me as if they were meant to reprobate some part of his past conduct. The great business of his life (he said) was to escape from himself; this disposition he considered as the disease of his mind, which nothing cured but company. We visited the late Mr. Banks, of Dorsetshire; the conversation turning upon pictures, which Johnson could not well see, he retired to a corner of the room, stretching out his right leg as far as he could reach before him, then bringing up his left leg, and stretching his right still further on. The old gentleman observing him, went up to him, and in a very courteous manner assured him, though it was not a new house, the flooring was perfectly safe. The Doctor started from his reverie like a person waked out of his sleep, but spoke not a word."

Johnson used to be a pretty frequent visitor at the house of Mr. Richardson, author of Clarissa. Mr. Hogarth came one day to see Richardson. While he was talking, he perceived a person standing at a window in the room, shaking his head, and rolling himself about in a strange ridiculous manner. He concluded that he was an idiot, whom his relations had put under the care of Mr. Richardson, as a very good man. To his great surprise, however, this figure stalked forwards to where he and Mr. Richardson were sitting, and all at once took up the argument, and burst out into an invective against George the Second.

Garrick repeated an Epitaph upon Phillips.° Johnson shook his head at these common-place funeral lines. "I think, Davy, I can make a better." Then stirring about his tea for a little while, in a state of meditation, he almost extempore produced the following verses:

"Phillips, whose touch harmonious could remove
The pangs of guilty power or hapless love;
Rest here, distress'd by poverty no more,
Here find that calm thou gav'st so oft before;
Sleep, undisturb'd, within this peaceful shrine,
Till angels wake thee with a note like thine!"

Johnson considered Dr. Birch as a dull writer. "Tom Birch is as brisk as a bee in conversation; but no sooner does he take a pen in his hand, than it becomes a torpedo to him, and benumbs all his faculties."

His circumstances were at this time embarrassed: yet his affection for his mother was so warm, and so liberal, that he took upon himself a debt of hers.

To Mr. Levett; in Lichfield.

"I am extremely sorry that we have encroached so much upon your forbearance with respect to the interest, which I am not immediately able to remit to you, but will pay it (I think twelve pounds,) in two months. I look upon this, and on the future interest of that mortgage, as my own debt; and beg that you will be pleased to give me directions how to pay it, and not mention it to my dear mother. Sam. Johnson."

In 1744 he produced The Life of Richard Savage: a man of whom it is difficult to speak impartially, without wondering that he was for some time the intimate companion of Johnson; for his character was marked by profligacy, insolence, and ingratitude: yet, as he undoubtedly had a warm and vigorous, though unregulated mind, had seen life in all its varieties, and been much in the company of the statesmen and wits of his time, he could communicate to Johnson an abundant supply of such materials as his philosophical curiosity most eagerly desired. It is melancholy to reflect, that Johnson and Savage were sometimes in such extreme indigence, that they could not pay for a lodging; so that they have wandered together whole nights in the streets. He

told Sir Joshua Reynolds that one night in particular, when Savage and he walked round St. James's-Square for want of a lodging, they were not at all depressed by their situation; but in high spirits and brimful of patriotism, traversed the square for several hours, inveighed against the minister and "resolved they would *stand by their country*."

Johnson's "Life of Savage" is one of the most interesting narratives in the English language. Sir Joshua Reynolds told me, that upon his return from Italy he met with it in Devonshire, knowing nothing of its author, and began to read it while he was standing with his arm leaning against a chimney-piece. It seized his attention so strongly, that, not being able to lay down the book till he had finished it, when he attempted to move, he found his arm totally benumbed. The rapidity with which this work was composed is a wonderful circumstance. Johnson has been heard to say, "I wrote forty-eight of the printed octavo pages of the Life of Savage at a sitting; but then I sat up all night."

Johnson and Taylor went to see Garrick perform, and afterwards passed the evening at a tavern with him and old Giffard. Johnson, after censuring some mistakes in emphasis, which Garrick had committed in the course of that night's acting, said, "The players, Sir, have got a kind of rant, with which they run on, without any regard either to accent or emphasis." Both Garrick and Giffard were offended at this sarcasm, and endeavoured to refute it; upon which Johnson rejoined, "Well now, I'll give you something to speak, with which you are little acquainted, and then we shall see how just my observation is. That shall be the criterion. Let me hear you repeat the ninth Commandment, 'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.'" Both tried at it, said Dr. Taylor, and both mistook the emphasis, which should be upon *not* and *false witness*. Johnson put them right, and enjoyed his victory with great glee.

In 1745 he published a pamphlet entitled, "Miscellaneous Observations on the Tragedy of Macbeth, with Remarks on Shakspeare." His pamphlet was fortunate enough to ob-

tain the approbation even of the supercilious Warburton himself.

David Garrick, having become joint patentee and manager of Drury-lane theatre, Johnson honoured his opening of it with a Prologue. Like the celebrated Epilogue to the "Distressed Mother," it was, during the season, often called for by the audience.

But the year 1747 is distinguished as the epoch when Johnson's arduous and important work, his DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE, was announced to the world, by the publication of its Plan or PROSPECTUS. He told me, that "it was not the effect of particular study; but that it had grown up in his mind insensibly." I have been informed by Mr. James Dodsley, that several years before this period, when Johnson was one day sitting in his brother Robert's shop, he heard his brother suggest to him, that a Dictionary of the English Language would be a work that would be well received by the publick; that Johnson seemed at first to catch at the proposition, but, after a pause, said, in his abrupt decisive manner, "I believe I shall not undertake it." Johnson told me, "Sir, the way in which the plan of my Dictionary came to be inscribed to Lord Chesterfield, was this: I had neglected to write it by the time appointed. Dodsley suggested a desire to have it addressed to Lord Chesterfield. I laid hold of this as a pretext for delay, that it might be better done, and let Dodsley have his desire. I said to my friend, Dr. Bathurst, 'Now if any good comes of my addressing to Lord Chesterfield, it will be ascribed to deep policy,' when, in fact, it was only a casual excuse for laziness." His "Plan" in manuscript got into the hands of a noble Lord, who carried it to Lord Chesterfield. When Taylor observed this might be an advantage, Johnson replied, "No, Sir, it would have come out with more bloom, if it had not been seen before by any body."

Dr. Adams found him one day busy at his Dictionary. ADAMS. "But, Sir, how can you do this in three years?" JOHNSON. "Sir, I have no doubt that I can do it in three

years." ADAMS. "But the French Academy, which consists of forty members, took forty years to compile their Dictionary." JOHNSON. "Sir, thus it is. This is the proportion. Let me see; forty times forty is sixteen hundred. As three to sixteen hundred, so is the proportion of an Englishman to a Frenchman." For the mechanical part he employed six amanuenses. To all these painful labourers Johnson shewed a never-ceasing kindness.

While the Dictionary was going forward, Johnson lived part of the time in Holborn, part in Gough-square, Fleet-street; and he had an upper room fitted up like a counting-house for the purpose, in which he gave to the copyists their several tasks. The words, partly taken from other dictionaries, and partly supplied by himself, having been first written down with spaces left between them, he delivered in writing their etymologies, definitions, and various significations. The authorities ° were copied from the books themselves, in which he had marked the passages with a black-lead pencil. I remember his telling me, that a large portion of it having by mistake been written upon both sides of the paper, so as to be inconvenient for the compositor, it cost him twenty pounds to have it transcribed upon one side only.

But his enlarged and lively mind could not be satisfied without more diversity of employment, and the pleasure of animated relaxation. He therefore formed a club in Ivy lane, Paternoster Row, with a view to enjoy literary discussion, and amuse his evening hours. The members associated with him in this little society were, his beloved friend Dr. Richard Bathurst,° Mr. Hawkesworth, afterwards well known by his writings, Mr. John Hawkins, an attorney, and a few others of different professions.

In the Gentleman's Magazine he wrote a "Life of Roscommon," which he afterwards inserted amongst his Lives of the English Poets.

Mr. Dodsley brought out his PRECEPTOR. Johnson furnished "The Preface," as also, "The Vision of Theodore, the Hermit, found in his Cell," a most beautiful allegory of

human life, under the figure of ascending the mountain of Existence. Dr. Johnson thought this was the best thing he ever wrote.

In January, 1749, he published "THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES," being the Tenth Satire of Juvenal imitated." I have heard him say, that he composed seventy lines of it in one day, without putting one of them upon paper till they were finished. I remember when I once regretted to him that he had not given us more of Juvenal's Satires, he said he probably should give more, for he had them all in his head.

Garrick observed in his sprightly manner, with more vivacity than regard to just discrimination, as is usual with wits, "When Johnson lived much with the Herveys, and saw a good deal of what was passing in life, he wrote his 'London,' which is lively and easy: when he became more retired, he gave us his 'Vanity of Human Wishes,' which is as hard as Greek. Had he gone on to imitate another satire, it would have been as hard as Hebrew."

Garrick being now manager of Drury-lane theatre, kindly and generously made use of it to bring out Johnson's tragedy, which had been long kept back for want of encouragement. But in this benevolent purpose he met with no small difficulty from the temper of Johnson. "Sir, (said he) the fellow wants me to make Mahomet run mad, that he may have an opportunity of tossing his hands and kicking his heels."

Before the curtain drew up, there were catcalls and whistling, which alarmed Johnson's friends. The Prologue, which was written by himself in a manly strain, soothed the audience, and the play went off tolerably, till it came to the conclusion, when Mrs. Pritchard, the Heroine of the piece, was to be strangled upon the stage, and was to speak two lines with the bow-string round her neck. The audience cried out '*Murder! Murder!*' She several times attempted to speak; but in vain. At last she was obliged to go off the stage alive. This passage was afterwards struck out, and she was carried off to be put to death behind the scenes."

Notwithstanding all the support of such performers as

Garrick, Barry, Mrs. Cibber, Mrs. Pritchard, and every advantage of dress and decoration, the tragedy of Irene did not please the publick. Mr. Garrick's zeal carried it through for nine nights, so that the authour had his three nights' profits. Garrick has complained to me, that Johnson not only had not the faculty of producing the impressions of tragedy, but that he had not the sensibility to perceive them.

When asked how he felt upon the ill success of his tragedy, he replied, "Like the Monument;" meaning that he continued firm and unmoved as that column. "A man (said he) who writes a book, thinks himself wiser or wittier than the rest of mankind; he supposes that he can instruct or amuse them, and the publick to whom he appeals, must, after all, be the judges of his pretensions."

He appeared behind the scenes, and even in one of the side boxes, in a scarlet waistcoat, with rich gold lace, and a gold-laced hat. He humourously observed to Mr. Langton, "that when in that dress he could not treat people with the same ease as when in his usual plain clothes." He for a considerable time used to frequent the *Green-Room*, and seemed to take delight in dissipating his gloom, by mixing in the sprightly chit-chat of the motley circle then to be found there. Johnson at last denied himself this amusement, from considerations of rigid virtue; saying, "I'll come no more behind your scenes, David; for the silk stockings and white bosoms of your actresses excite my amorous propensities."

In 1750 he came forth in the character for which he was eminently qualified, a majestick teacher of moral and religious wisdom. The vehicle which he chose was that of a periodical paper, which he knew had been, upon former occasions, employed with great success. The Tatler, Spectator, and Guardian, were the last of the kind published in England. He gave Sir Joshua Reynolds the following account of its name: "What *must* be done, Sir, *will* be done. I was at a loss how to name it. I sat down at night upon my bedside, and resolved that I would not go to sleep till I had fixed its

title. The Rambler seemed the best that occurred, and I took it."[c]

Many of these discourses, which we should suppose had been laboured with all the slow attention of literary leisure, were written in haste as the moment pressed, without even being read over by him before they were printed. Sir Joshua Reynolds once asked him by what means he had attained his extraordinary accuracy and flow of language. He told him, that he had early laid it down as a fixed rule to do his best on every occasion, and in every company: to impart whatever he knew in the most forcible language he could put it in; and that by constant practice, and never suffering any careless expressions to escape him, or attempting to deliver his thoughts without arranging them in the clearest manner, it became habitual to him.

Johnson told me, with an amiable fondness, a little pleasing circumstance relative to this work. Mrs. Johnson, in whose judgement and taste he had great confidence, said to him, after a few numbers of the Rambler had come out, "I thought very well of you before; but I did not imagine you could have written any thing equal to this."

Some of these more solemn papers, I doubt not, particularly attracted the notice of Dr. Young, the authour of "The Night Thoughts." Johnson was pleased when told of the minute attention with which Young had signified his approbation of his Essays.

I will venture to say, that in no writings whatever can be found more *bark and steel for the mind*. No. 32 on "patience, even under extreme misery," is wonderfully lofty, and as much above the rant of stoicism, as the Sun of Revelation is brighter than the twilight of Pagan philosophy. I never read the following sentence without feeling my frame thrill:—"I think there is some reason for questioning whether the body and mind are not so proportioned, that the one can bear all which can be inflicted on the other; whether virtue cannot stand its ground as long as life, and whether a soul well principled will not be sooner separated than subdued."

Several of the characters in the Rambler were drawn so naturally, that a club in one of the towns in Essex imagined themselves to be severally exhibited in it, and were much incensed against a person who, they suspected, had thus made them objects of publick notice; nor were they quieted till authentick assurance was given them, that the Rambler was written by a person who had never heard of any one of them. Some of the characters are believed to have been actually drawn from the life, particularly that of Prospero from Garrick, who never entirely forgave its pointed satire.°

It has of late been the fashion to compare the style of Addison and Johnson,° and to depreciate, I think, very unjustly, the style of Addison as nerveless and feeble, because it has not the strength and energy of that of Johnson. Let us remember the character of his style, as given by Johnson himself: "What he attempted he performed: he is *never feeble*, and he did not wish to be energetick; he is never rapid, and he never stagnates. His sentences have neither studied amplitude, nor affected brevity: his periods, though not diligently rounded, are voluble and easy. Whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison."

Some of the translations of the mottos are by a Mr. *F. Lewis*, whom Johnson thus described: "Sir, he lived in London, and hung loose upon society."

Mrs. Anna Williams, daughter of a very ingenious Welsh physician, and a woman of more than ordinary talents and literature, having come to London in hopes of being cured of a cataract in both eyes, was kindly received as a constant visitor at his house while Mrs. Johnson lived; and, after her death, had an apartment from him during the rest of her life.

There was a suspension of Johnson's work during a part of the year 1752; for on the 17th of March his wife died. To argue from her being much older than Johnson, or any other circumstances, that he could not really love her, is absurd: for love is not a subject of reasoning. But a fool-

ing, and therefore there are no common principles upon which one can persuade another concerning it.

The following very solemn and affecting prayer was found after Dr. Johnson's decease, by his servant, Mr. Francis Barber:

"April 26, 1752, being after 12 at Night of the 25th.

"O Lord! Governour of heaven and earth, in whose hands are embodied and departed Spirits, if thou hast ordained the Souls of the Dead to minister to the Living, and appointed my departed Wife to have care of me, grant that I may enjoy the good effects of her attention and ministration, whether exercised by appearance, impulses, dreams, or in any other manner agreeable to thy Government. Forgive my presumption, enlighten my ignorance, and however meaner agents are employed, grant me the blessed influences of thy holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

"March 28, 1753. I kept this day as the anniversary of my Tetty's death, with prayer and tears in the morning. In the evening I prayed for her conditionally, if it were lawful."

"April 23, 1753. I know not whether I do not too much indulge the vain longings of affection; but I hope they intenerate my heart, and that when I die, like my Tetty, this affection will be acknowledged in a happy interview and that in the mean time I am incited by it to piety. I will, however, not deviate too much from common and received methods of devotion."

Her wedding-ring, when she became his wife, was, after her death, preserved by him, as long as he lived, with an affectionate care, in a little round wooden box, in the inside of which he pasted a slip of paper, thus inscribed by him in fair characters, as follows:

"*Eheu!*
Eliz. Johnson,
Nupta Jul. 9° 1736,
Mortua, eheu!
Mart. 17° 1752."

The dreadful shock of separation took place in the night; and he immediately dispatched a letter to his friend, the Reverend Dr. Taylor, which, as Taylor told me, expressed grief in the strongest manner he had ever read; so that it is much to be regretted it has not been preserved. The letter was brought to Dr. Taylor, at his house in the Cloysters, Westminster, about three in the morning; and as it signified an earnest desire to see him, he got up, and went to Johnson as soon as he was dressed, and found him in tears and in extreme agitation. After being a little while together, Johnson requested him to join with him in prayer.

His humble friend Mr. Robert Levet was an obscure practiser in physick amongst the lower people, his fees being sometimes very small, sometimes whatever provisions his patients could afford him; but of such extensive practice in that way that Mrs. Williams has told me, his walk was from Houndsditch to Marylebone. Such was Johnson's predilection for him, and fanciful estimation of his moderate abilities, that I have heard him say he should not be satisfied, though attended by all the College of Physicians, unless he had Mr. Levet with him. Mr. Levet had an apartment in his house, or his chambers, and waited upon him every morning, through the whole course of his late and tedious breakfast. He was of a strange grotesque appearance, stiff and formal in his manner, and seldom said a word while any company was present.

Sir Joshua Reynolds was truly his *dulce decus*, and with him he maintained an uninterrupted intimacy to the last hour of his life. Sir Joshua, indeed, was lucky enough at their very first meeting to make a remark, which was so much above the commonplace style of conversation, that Johnson at once perceived that Reynolds had the habit of thinking for himself. The ladies were regretting the death of a friend, to whom they owed great obligations; upon which Reynolds observed, "You have however, the comfort of being relieved from a burthen of gratitude." They were shocked a little at this alleviating suggestion as too selfish; but Johnson

defended it in his clear and forcible manner, and was much pleased with the *mind*, the fair view of human nature.

One evening at the Miss Cotterells', the then Duchess of Argyle and another lady of high rank came in. Johnson thinking that he and his friend were neglected, addressed himself in a low tone to Mr. Reynolds, saying, "How much do you think you and I could get in a week, if we were to *work as hard* as we could?" — as if they had been common mechanicks.

Bennet Langton came to London chiefly with a view of endeavouring to be introduced to the authour of the Rambler. By a fortunate chance he happened to take lodgings in a house where Mr. Levet frequently visited; Johnson wished to see numbers at his *levee*, as his morning circle of company might, with strict propriety, be called. Mr. Langton was exceedingly surprised when the sage first appeared. He had not received the smallest intimation of his figure, dress, or manner. From perusing his writings, he fancied he should see a decent, well-drest, in short, a remarkably decorous philosopher. Instead of which, down from his bed-chamber, about noon, came, as newly risen, a huge, uncouth figure, with a little dark wig which scarcely covered his head, and his clothes hanging loose about him. But his conversation was so rich, so animated, and so forcible, and his religious and political notions so congenial with those in which Langton had been educated, that he conceived for him that veneration and attachment which he ever preserved.

Mr. Beauclerk's being of the St. Alban's family, and, having, in some particulars, a resemblance to Charles the Second, contributed, in Johnson's imagination, to throw a lustre upon his other qualities; and in a short time, the moral, pious Johnson, and the gay dissipated Beauclerk, were companions. "What a coalition! (said Garrick, when he heard of this:) I shall have my old friend to bail out of the Round-house." Beauclerk could take more liberty with him, than any body with whom I ever saw him. One Sunday, when the weather was very fine, Beauclerk enticed him, insensibly, to saunter

about all the morning. They went into a church-yard, in the time of divine service, and Johnson laid himself down at his ease upon one of the tomb-stones. "Now, Sir, (said Beauclerk) you are like Hogarth's Idle Apprentice." When Johnson got his pension, Beauclerk said to him, in the humourous phrase of Falstaff, "I hope you'll now purge and live cleanly, like a gentleman."

One night, when Beauclerk and Langton had supped at a tavern in London, and sat till about three in the morning, it came into their heads to go and knock up Johnson, and see if they could prevail on him to join them in a ramble. They rapped violently at the door of his chambers in the Temple, till at last he appeared in his shirt, with his little black wig on the top of his head, instead of a night-cap, and a poker in his hand, imagining, probably, that some ruffians were coming to attack him. When he discovered who they were, and was told their errand, he smiled, and with great good humour agreed to their proposal: "What, is it you, you dogs! I'll have a frisk with you." He was soon drest, and they sallied forth together into Covent-Garden, where the greengrocers and fruiterers were beginning to arrange their hampers, just come in from the country. Johnson made some attempts to help them; but the honest gardeners stared so at his figure and manner, and odd interference, that he soon saw his services were not relished. They then repaired to one of the neighbouring taverns, and made a bowl of that liquor called *Bishop*,° which Johnson had always liked.

Langton deserted them, being engaged to breakfast with some young Ladies. Johnson scolded him for "leaving his social friends to go and sit with a set of wretched *un-idea'd* girls." Garrick being told of this ramble, said to him smartly, "I heard of your frolick t'other night. You'll be in the Chronicle." Upon which Johnson afterwards observed, "*He* durst not do such a thing. His *wife* would not *let* him!"

Lord Chesterfield had behaved to him in such a manner as to excite his contempt and indignation. The world has been for many years amused with a story confidently told and as

confidently repeated with additional circumstances, that a sudden disgust was taken by Johnson upon occasion of his having been one day kept long in waiting in his Lordship's antechamber, for which the reason assigned was, that he had company with him; and that at last, when the door opened, out walked Colley Cibber; and that Johnson was so violently provoked when he found for whom he had been so long excluded, that he went away in a passion, and never would return. Johnson himself assured me, that there was not the least foundation for it. He told me, that there never was any particular incident which produced a quarrel between Lord Chesterfield and him; but that his Lordship's continued neglect was the reason why he resolved to have no connexion with him. When the Dictionary was upon the eve of publication, Lord Chesterfield, who, it is said, had flattered himself with expectations that Johnson would dedicate the work to him, attempted, in a courtly manner, to soothe and insinuate himself with the Sage, by writing two papers in "The World," in recommendation of the work; and it must be confessed that they contain some studied compliments, so finely turned that if there had been no previous offence, it is probable that Johnson would have been highly delighted.

This courtly device failed of its effect. Johnson, who thought that "all was false and hollow," despised the honeyed words. "Sir, after making great professions, he had, for many years, taken no notice of me; but when my Dictionary was coming out, he fell a scribbling in 'The World' about it. Upon which, I wrote him a letter expressed in civil terms, but such as might shew him that I did not mind what he said or wrote, and that I had done with him."

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF CHESTERFIELD.

"MY LORD, February 7, 1755.

"I HAVE been lately informed, by the proprietor of the World, that two papers, in which my Dictionary is recommended to the publick, were written by your Lordship. To

be so distinguished, is an honour, which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

"When, upon some slight encouragement, I first visited your Lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address, and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself *Le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre.*

"Seven years, my Lord, have now past, since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties, of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it, at last, to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a Patron before.

"The shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

"Is not a Patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity, not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the Publick should consider me as owing that to a Patron, which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

"Having carried on my work thus far with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less; for I have been long wakened from that dream of hope in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation,

My Lord,
Your Lordship's most humble,
Most obedient servant,
SAM. JOHNSON."

"While this was the talk of the town" (says Dr. Adams), Dr. Warburton, finding that I was acquainted with Johnson, desired me earnestly to carry his compliments to him, and to tell him, that he honoured him for his manly behaviour in rejecting these condescensions of Lord Chesterfield, and for resenting the treatment he had received from him with a proper spirit. Johnson was visibly pleased with this compliment, for he had always a high opinion of Warburton. In the tenth Satire one of the couplets upon the vanity of wishes even for literary distinction stood thus:

> "Yet think what ills the scholar's life assail,
> Toil, envy, want, the *garret*, and the jail."

But after experiencing the uneasiness which Lord Chesterfield's fallacious patronage made him feel, he dismissed the word *garret* from the sad group,

> "Toil, envy, want, the *Patron*, and the jail."

"Sir (said Johnson) Lord Chesterfield is the proudest man this day existing." "No (said Dr. Adams), there is one person, at least, as proud; I think, by your own account you are the prouder man of the two." "But mine (replied Johnson instantly) was *defensive* pride."

"This man (said he) I thought had been a Lord among wits; but, I find, he is only a wit among Lords!"

The character of a "respectable Hottentot," in Lord Chesterfield's letters, has been generally understood to be meant for Johnson. I said, laughingly, that there was one trait which unquestionably did not belong to him; "he throws his meat any where but down his throat." "Sir (said he), Lord Chesterfield never saw me eat in his life."

Johnson found an interval of leisure to make an excursion to Oxford, for the purpose of consulting the libraries there. Of his conversation while at Oxford at this time, Mr. Warton preserved and communicated to me the following

memorial. "When Johnson came to Oxford in 1754, he wished to see his old College, *Pembroke*. I went with him. He was highly pleased to find all the College-servants which he had left there still remaining, particularly a very old butler. The master, Dr. Radcliffe, received him very coldly. Johnson at least expected that the master would order a copy of his Dictionary, now near publication; but the master did not choose to talk on the subject, never asked Johnson to dine, nor even to visit him, while he stayed at Oxford. Johnson said, '*There* lives a man, who lives by the revenues of literature, and will not move a finger to support it. If I come to live at Oxford, I shall take up my abode at Trinity.' We then called on the Reverend Mr. Meeke.

"JOHNSON: 'I remember, at the classical lecture in the Hall, I could not bear Meeke's superiority, and I tried to sit as far from him as I could, that I might not hear him construe.'

"Mr. Wise, Radclivian librarian, read to us a dissertation on some old divinities of Thrace, called the CABIRI. As we returned to Oxford in the evening, I out-walked Johnson, and he cried out *Sufflamina*, a Latin word, which came from his mouth with peculiar grace, and was as much as to say, *Put on your drag chain*. Before we got home, I again walked too fast for him; and he now cried out, 'Why, you walk as if you were pursued by all the CABIRI in a body.' In an evening we frequently took long walks from Oxford into the country, returning to supper. Once, in our way home we viewed the ruins of the abbies of Osency and Rewley, near Oxford. After at least half an hour's silence, Johnson said, 'I viewed them with indignation!' We had then a long conversation on Gothic buildings; and in talking of the form of old halls, he said, 'In these halls, the fire-place was anciently always in the middle of the room, till the Whigs removed it on one side.' 'Meeke was left behind at Oxford to feed on a Fellowship, and I went to London to get my living: now, Sir, see the difference of our literary characters!'"

The degree of Master of Arts was now considered as an honour of considerable importance, in order to grace the title-page of his Dictionary; and his character in the literary world being by this time deservedly high, his friends thought that, if proper exertions were made, the University of Oxford would pay him the compliment.

To the Reverend Thomas Warton.

"I am extremely obliged to you and to Mr. Wise for the uncommon care which you have taken of my interest.

"You know poor Mr. Dodsley has lost his wife; I hope he will not suffer so much as I yet suffer for the loss of mine.

Οἴμοι· τι δ' οἴμοι; θνητὰ γὰρ πεπόνθαμεν.°

I have ever since seemed to myself broken off from mankind; a kind of solitary wanderer in the wild of life, without any direction, or fixed point of view: a gloomy gazer on the world to which I have little relation. Sam. Johnson."

In 1755 we behold him to great advantage; his degree of Master of Arts conferred upon him, his Dictionary published, his correspondence animated, his benevolence exercised.

Dr. Adams, visiting him one day, found his parlour floor covered with parcels of foreign and English literary journals, and he told Dr. Adams he meant to undertake a Review. "How, Sir (said Dr. Adams), can you think of doing it alone? All branches of knowledge must be considered in it. Do you know Mathematicks? Do you know Natural History?" Johnson answered, "Why, Sir, I must do as well as I can. My chief purpose is to give my countrymen a view of what is doing in literature upon the continent; and I shall have, in a good measure, the choice of my subject, for I shall select such books as I best understand." Dr. Adams suggested Dr. Maty as an assistant. "*He* (said Johnson), the little black dog! I'd throw him into the Thames." The scheme, however, was dropped.

Mr. Andrew Millar, bookseller in the Strand, took the

principal charge of conducting the publication of Johnson's Dictionary; and as the patience of the proprietors was repeatedly tried and almost exhausted, by their expecting that the work would be compleated within the time which Johnson had sanguinely supposed, the learned author was often goaded to dispatch, more especially as he had received all the copy money, by different drafts, a considerable time before he had finished his task. When the messenger who carried the last sheet to Millar returned, Johnson asked him, "Well, what did he say?" — "Sir (answered the messenger), he said, 'Thank God I have done with him.'" "I am glad (replied Johnson, with a smile), that he thanks God for any thing."

To Bennet Langton.

"Sir,

"I have a mother more than eighty years old, who has counted the days to the publication of my book, in hopes of seeing me; and to her, if I can disengage myself here, I resolve to go.

"When the duty that calls me to Lichfield is discharged, my inclination will carry me to Langton. I shall delight to hear the ocean roar, or see the stars twinkle, in the company of men to whom Nature does not spread her volumes or utter her voice in vain. Sam. Johnson."

The Dictionary, with a Grammar and History of the English Language, being now at length published, in two volumes folio, the world contemplated with wonder so stupendous a work achieved by one man, while other countries had thought such undertakings fit only for whole academies. One of its excellencies has always struck me with peculiar admiration; I mean the perspicuity with which he has expressed abstract scientific notions. As an instance of this, I shall quote the following sentence: "When the radical idea branches out into parallel ramifications, how can a consecutive series be formed of senses in their nature collateral?"

A few of his definitions must be admitted to be erroneous. Thus, *Windward* and *Leeward*, though directly of opposite

meaning, are defined identically the same way. A lady once asked him how he came to define *Pastern* the *knee* of a horse: instead of making an elaborate defence, as she expected, he at once answered, "Ignorance, Madam, pure ignorance." His definition of *Network* has been often quoted with sportive malignity, as obscuring a thing in itself very plain. But to these frivolous censures no other answer is necessary than that with which we are furnished by his own Preface. "To explain requires the use of terms less abstruse than that which is to be explained, and such terms cannot always be found. Sometimes easier words are changed into harder; as, *burial*, into *sepulture* or *interment; dry*, into *desiccative; dryness*, into *siccity* or *aridity; fit*, into *paroxism;* for, the *easiest* word, whatever it be, can never be translated into one more easy."

His introducing his own opinions,° and even prejudices, under general definitions of words, while at the same time the original meaning of the words is not explained, as his *Tory, Whig, Pension, Oats, Excise*, and a few more, cannot be fully defended, and must be placed to the account of capricious and humourous indulgence. "You know, Sir, Lord Gower forsook the old Jacobite interest. When I came to the *Renegado*, after telling that it meant 'one who deserts to the enemy, a revolter,' I added, *Sometimes we say a* GOWER. Thus it went to the press: but the printer had more wit than I, and struck it out." This indulgence does not display itself only in sarcasm towards others, but sometimes in playful allusion to the notions commonly entertained of his own laborious task. Thus: "*Grub-street*, the name of a street in London, much inhabited by writers of small histories, *dictionaries*, and temporary poems; whence any mean production is called *Grub-street.*" — "*Lexicographer*, a writer of dictionaries, a *harmless drudge.*"

He said to Sir Joshua Reynolds, "If a man does not make new acquaintance as he advances through life, he will soon find himself left alone. A man, Sir, should keep his friendship *in constant repair.*"

The celebrated Mr. Wilkes, whose notions and habits of life were very opposite to his, but who was ever eminent for literature and vivacity, sallied forth with a little *Jeu d'Esprit* upon the following passage in his Grammar of the English Tongue, prefixed to the Dictionary: "*H* seldom, perhaps never, begins any but the first syllable." In any essay printed in the "Public Advertiser," this lively writer enumerated many instances in opposition to this remark; for example, "The authour of this observation must be a man of a quick *apprehension*, and of a most *compre-hensive* genius."

He had the pleasure of being treated in a very different manner by Mr. Garrick:

"*On* JOHNSON'S DICTIONARY.

"TALK of war with a Briton, he'll boldly advance,
That one English soldier will beat ten of France;
Would we alter the boast from the sword to the pen,
Our odds are still greater, still greater our men;
And Johnson, well-arm'd like a hero of yore,
Has beat forty French, and will beat forty more!"

He wrote in his Journal the following scheme of life, for Sunday: "Having lived" (as he with tenderness of conscience expresses himself) "not without an habitual reverence for the Sabbath, yet without that attention to its religious duties which Christianity requires;"

"1. To rise early, and in order to it, to go to sleep early on Saturday.

"2. To use some extraordinary devotion in the morning.

"3. To examine the tenour of my life, and particularly the last week; and to mark my advances in religion, or recession from it.

"4. To read the Scripture methodically with such helps as are at hand.

"5. To go to church twice.

"6. To read books of Divinity, either speculative or practical.

"7. To instruct my family.

"8. To wear off by meditation any worldly soil contracted in the week."

He had spent, during the progress of the work, the money for which he had contracted to write his Dictionary. The reward of his labour was only fifteen hundred and seventy-five pounds; and when the expence of amanuenses and paper and other articles are deducted, his clear profit was very inconsiderable. I once said to him, "I am sorry, Sir, you did not get more for your Dictionary." His answer was, "I am sorry too. But it was very well. The booksellers are generous liberal-minded men."

"Dr. *Watts*," said Johnson, "was one of the first who taught the Dissenters to write and speak like other men, by shewing them that elegance might consist with piety."

His defence of tea° against Mr. Jonas Hanway's violent attack upon that elegant and popular beverage, shews how very well a man of genius can write upon the slightest subject, when he writes, as the Italians say, *con amore:* I suppose no person ever enjoyed with more relish the infusion of that fragrant leaf than Johnson. The quantities which he drank of it at all hours were so great, that his nerves must have been uncommonly strong, not to have been extremely relaxed by such an intemperate use of it.

Johnson's most exquisite critical essay in the Literary Magazine, and indeed anywhere, is his review of Soame Jenyns's° "Inquiry into the Origin of Evil." Jenyns "ventured far beyond his depth," and accordingly, was exposed by Johnson, both with acute argument and brilliant wit.

He resumed his scheme of giving an edition of Shakspeare with notes; but his indolence prevented him from pursuing it with diligence. It is remarkable, that at this time his fancied activity was for the moment so vigorous, that he promised his work should be published before Christmas, 1757. Yet nine years elapsed before it saw the light.

About this period he was offered a living of considerable value in Lincolnshire, if he were inclined to enter into holy orders. It was a rectory in the gift of Mr. Langton. But

he did not accept of it; partly I believe from a conscientious motive, and partly because his love of a London life was so strong.

To Bennet Langton.

"I was much pleased with the tale that you told me of being tutour to your sisters. I, who have no sisters nor brothers, look with some degree of innocent envy on those who may be said to be born to friends: and cannot see, without wonder, how rarely that native union is afterwards regarded. We tell the ladies that good wives make good husbands; I believe it is a more certain position that good brothers make good sisters.

"The two Wartons just looked into the town, and were taken to see *Cleone*, where, David says, they were starved for want of company to keep them warm. David and Doddy ° have had a new quarrel, and, I think, cannot conveniently quarrel any more. 'Cleone' was well acted by all the characters, but Bellamy left nothing to be desired. I went the first night, and supported it as well as I might: for Doddy, you know, is my patron, and I would not desert him. The play was very well received. Doddy, after the danger was over, went every night to the stage-side, and cryed at the distress of poor Cleone.

"Mr. Reynolds has within these few days raised his price to twenty guineas a head,° and Miss ° is much employed in miniatures. Sam. Johnson."

Mr. Burney,° during a visit to the capital, had an interview with him in Gough-square, where he dined and drank tea with him, and was introduced to the acquaintance of Mrs. Williams. After dinner, Johnson proposed to Mr. Burney to go up with him into his garret, which being accepted, he there found about five or six Greek folios, a deal writing-desk, and a chair and a half. Johnson giving to his guest the entire seat, tottered himself on one with only three legs and one arm. Here he gave Mr. Burney Mrs. Williams's

history, and shewed him some volumes of his Shakspeare already printed, to prove that he was in earnest. Upon Mr. Burney's opening the first volume, at the Merchant of Venice, he observed to him, that he seemed to be more severe on Warburton than Theobald. "O poor Tib.! (said Johnson) he was ready knocked down to my hands; Warburton stands between me and him." "But, Sir, (said Mr. Burney), you'll, have Warburton upon your bones, won't you?" "No Sir; he'll not come out: he'll only growl in his den." "But you think, Sir, that Warburton is a superiour critick to Theobald?" — "O, Sir, he'd make two-and-fifty Theobalds, cut into slices! The worst of Warburton is, that he has a rage for saying something, when there's nothing to be said."

He began a new periodical paper, entitled "THE IDLER," which came out every Saturday in a weekly newspaper, called "The Universal Chronicle." The IDLER is evidently the work of the same mind which produced the RAMBLER, but has less body and more spirit.

Mr. Langton remembers Johnson, when on a visit at Oxford, asking him one evening how long it was till the post went out; and on being told about half an hour, he exclaimed, "Then we shall do very well." He upon this instantly sat down and finished an Idler, which it was necessary should be in London the next day. Mr. Langton having signified a wish to read it, "Sir, (said he), you shall not do more than I have done myself." He then folded it up, and sent it off.

He describes "the attendant on a *Court*," as one "whose business is to watch the looks of a being weak and foolish as himself."

His mother died at the great age of ninety, an event which deeply affected him.

To MISS PORTER, AT MRS. JOHNSON'S, IN LICHFIELD.

"I THINK myself obliged to you beyond all expression of gratitude for your care of my dear mother. GOD grant it may not be without success. Tell Kitty, that I shall never

forget her tenderness for her mistress. Whatever you can do, continue to do. My heart is very full.

"I hope you received twelve guineas on Monday. I found a way of sending them by means of the Postmaster, after I had written my letter, and hope they came safe. I will send you more in a few days. God bless you all. Sam. Johnson."

To his Mother.

"Dear Honoured Mother,

"Neither your condition nor your character make it fit for me to say much. You have been the best mother, and I believe the best woman in the world. I thank you for your indulgence to me, and beg forgiveness of all that I have done ill, and all that I have omitted to do well. God grant you his Holy Spirit, and receive you to everlasting happiness, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen. Lord Jesus receive your spirit. Amen.

"I am, dear, dear Mother,
"Your dutiful Son,
"Sam. Johnson."

Soon after this event, he wrote his "Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia." Mr. Strahan the printer told me, that Johnson wrote it, that with the profits he might defray the expence of his mother's funeral, and pay some little debts which she had left. He told Sir Joshua Reynolds, that he composed it in the evenings of one week, sent it to the press in portions as it was written, and had never since read it over. Mr. Strahan, Mr. Johnston, and Mr. Dodsley purchased it for a hundred pounds, but afterwards paid him twenty-five pounds more, when it came to a second edition. Rasselas,° as was observed to me by a very accomplished lady, may be considered as a more enlarged and more deeply philosophical discourse in prose, upon "Vanity of Human Wishes."

Notwithstanding my high admiration of Rasselas I will not maintain that the "morbid melancholy in Johnson's constitution may not, perhaps, have made life appear to him

more insipid and unhappy than it generally is." I always remember a remark made to me by a Turkish lady, educated in France, "*Ma foi, Monsieur, notre bonheur depend de la façon que notre sang circule.*"

He refreshed himself by an excursion to Oxford, of which the following short characteristical notice, in his own words, is preserved: — ". . . . is now making tea for me. I have been in my gown ever since I came here. It was, at my first coming, quite new and handsome. I have swum thrice, which I had disused for many years. I have proposed to Vansittart climbing over the wall," but he has refused me. And I have clapped my hands till they are sore, at Dr. King's speech."

He said, "No man will be a sailor who has contrivance enough to get himself into a jail; for being in a ship is being in a jail, with the chance of being drowned." And at another time, "A man in a jail has more room, better food, and commonly better company."

To John Wilkes.

"Dear Sir,

"I am again your petitioner in behalf of that great Cham of literature," Samuel Johnson. His black servant," whose name is Francis Barber, has been pressed on board the Stag Frigate, Captain Angel, and our lexicographer is in great distress. You know what matter of animosity the said Johnson has against you: and I dare say you desire no other opportunity of resenting it, than that of laying him under an obligation.

"Your affectionate obliged humble servant,

"T. Smollett."

"There are (said he) inexcusable lies, and consecrated lies. For instance, we are told that on the arrival of the news of the unfortunate battle of Fontenoy, every heart beat, and every eye was in tears. Now we know that no man eat his dinner the worse, but there *should* have been all this concern: and to say there *was*, (smiling) may be reckoned a consecrated lie."

To Mr. Joseph Baretti, at Milan.

"The only change in my way of life is, that I have frequented the theatre more than in former seasons. But I have gone thither only to escape from myself. Sam. Johnson."

A lady having at this time solicited him to obtain the Archbishop of Canterbury's patronage to have her son sent to the University, he wrote to her the following answer.

"Madam,

"My delay in answering your letter could proceed only from my unwillingness to destroy any hope that you had formed. Hope is itself a species of happiness, and, perhaps, the chief happiness which this world affords: but, like all other pleasures immoderately enjoyed, the excesses of hope must be expiated by pain; and expectations improperly indulged, must end in disappointment. If it be asked, what is the improper expectation which it is dangerous to indulge, experience will quickly answer, that it is such expectation as is dictated not by reason, but by desire.

"When you made your request to me, you should have considered, Madam, what you were asking. You ask me to solicit a great man, to whom I never spoke, for a young person whom I had never seen, upon a supposition which I had no means of knowing to be true. There is no reason why, amongst all the great, I should chuse to supplicate the Archbishop, nor why, among all the possible objects of his bounty, the Archbishop should chuse your son. If I could help you in this exigence by any proper means, it would give me pleasure: but this proposal is so very remote from usual methods that I cannot comply with it, but at the risk of such answer and suspicions as I believe you do not wish me to undergo.

"Sam. Johnson."

To Mr. Joseph Baretti, at Milan.

"Last winter I went down to my native town, where I found the streets much narrower and shorter than I thought I

had left them, inhabited by a new race of people to whom I was very little known. My play-fellows were grown old, and forced me to suspect that I was no longer young. My only remaining friend has changed his principles, and was become the tool of the predominant faction. My daughter-in-law, from whom I expected most, and whom I met with sincere benevolence, has lost the beauty and gaiety of youth, without having gained much of the wisdom of age. I wandered about for five days, and took the first convenient opportunity of returning to a place, where, if there is not much happiness, there is, at least, such a diversity of good and evil, that slight vexations do not fix upon the heart. SAM. JOHNSON."

The accession of George the Third opened a new and brighter prospect to men of literary merit. Johnson having been represented as a very learned and good man, without any certain provision, his Majesty was pleased to grant him a pension of three hundred pounds a year. The Earl of Bute, who was then Prime Minister, had the honour to announce this instance of his Sovereign's bounty.

Sir Joshua Reynolds told me, that Johnson called on him after his Majesty's intention had been notified to him, and said he wished to consult his friends as to the propriety of his accepting this mark of the royal favour, after the definitions which he had given in his Dictionary of *pension* and *pensioners*. He then told Sir Joshua that Lord Bute said to him expressly, "It is not given you for any thing you are to do, but for what you have done." When I spoke to Lord Loughborough, wishing to know if he recollected the prime mover in the business, he said, "All his friends assisted:" and when I told him that Mr. Sheridan strenuously asserted his claim to it, his Lordship said, "He rang the bell." Dr. Johnson replied in a fervour of gratitude, "The English language does not afford me terms adequate to my feelings on this occasion. I must have recourse to the French. I am *pénétré* with his Majesty's goodness."

This year his friend, Sir Joshua Reynolds, paid a visit of some weeks to his native country, Devonshire, in which he

was accompanied by Johnson. He was entertained at the seats of several noblemen and gentlemen in the west of England; but the greatest part of this time was passed at Plymouth, where the magnificence of the navy, the ship-building and all its circumstances, afforded him a grand subject of contemplation. Reynolds and he were at this time the guests of Dr. Mudge, the celebrated surgeon; and Johnson formed an acquaintance with Dr. Mudge's father, that very eminent divine, the Reverend Zachariah Mudge, Prebendary of Exeter, who was idolised in the west. He preached a sermon purposely that Johnson might hear him; and afterwards Johnson honoured his memory by drawing his character.

Having observed, that in consequence of the Dock-yard a new town had arisen about two miles off as a rival to the old; and knowing from his sagacity, and just observation of human nature, that it is certain if a man hates at all, he will hate his next neighbour, he set himself resolutely on the side of the old town, the *established* town. Plymouth is very plentifully supplied with water by a river brought into it from a great distance, which is so abundant that it runs to waste in the town. The Dock, or New-town, being totally destitute of water, petitioned Plymouth that a small portion of the conduit might be permitted to go to them. Johnson, affecting to entertain the passions of the place, exclaimed, "No, no! I am against the *dockers*," I am a Plymouth-man. Rogues! let them die of thirst. They shall not have a drop!"

To Mr. Joseph Baretti, at Milan.

"There is, indeed, nothing that so much seduces reason from vigilance, as the thought of passing life with an amiable woman; and if all would happen that a lover fancies, I know not what other terrestrial happiness would deserve pursuit. But love and marriage are different states. A woman, we are sure, will not always be fair; we are not sure she will always be virtuous: and man cannot retain through life that

respect and assiduity by which he pleases for a day or for a month. I do not, however, pretend to have discovered that life has any thing more to be desired than a prudent and virtuous marriage. SAM. JOHNSON."

This is to me a memorable year; for in it I had the happiness to obtain the acquaintance of that extraordinary man whose memoirs I am now writing. Though then but two-and-twenty, I had for several years read his works with delight and instruction, and had the highest reverence for their authour, which had grown up in my fancy into a kind of mysterious veneration, by figuring to myself a state of solemn elevated abstraction, in which I supposed him to live in the immense metropolis of London. Mr. Gentleman had given me a representation of the figure and manner of DICTIONARY JOHNSON as he was then generally called.

Mr. Thomas Davies the actor, who then kept a bookseller's shop in Russell-street, Covent-garden, told me that Johnson was very much his friend, and came frequently to his house, where he more than once invited me to meet him; but by some unlucky accident or other he was prevented from coming to us.

At last, on Monday, the 16th of May, when I was sitting in Mr. Davies' back-parlour, after having drunk tea with him and Mrs. Davies, Johnson unexpectedly came into the shop; and Mr. Davies having perceived him through the glass-door in the room in which we were sitting, advancing towards us, — he announced his awful approach to me, somewhat in the manner of an actor in the part of Horatio, when he addresses Hamlet on the appearance of his father's ghost, "Look, my Lord, it comes." I found that I had a very perfect idea of Johnson's figure, from the portrait of him painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds soon after he had published his Dictionary, in the attitude of sitting in his easy chair in deep meditation; which was the first picture his friend did for him. Mr. Davies mentioned my name, and respectfully introduced me to him. I was much agitated; recollecting his prejudice against the Scotch, I said to Davies, "Don't tell where I

come from." — "From Scotland," cried Davies, roguishly. "Mr. Johnson, (said I) I do indeed come from Scotland, but I cannot help it." He seized the expression "come from Scotland." "That, Sir, I find, is what a very great many of your countrymen cannot help." This stroke stunned me a good deal: and when we had sat down, I felt myself not a little embarrassed, and apprehensive of what might come next. He then addressed himself to Davies: "What do you think of Garrick? He has refused me an order for the play for Miss Williams, because he knows the house will be full, and that an order would be worth three shillings." Eager to take any opening to get into conversation with him, I ventured to say, "O, Sir, I cannot think Mr. Garrick would grudge such a trifle to you." "Sir, (said he, with a stern look,) I have known David Garrick longer than you have done: and I know no right you have to talk to me on the subject." I now felt myself much mortified, and began to think, that the hope which I had long indulged of obtaining his acquaintance was blasted.

Davies followed me to the door, and when I complained to him a little of the hard blows which the great man had given me, he kindly took upon him to console me by saying, "Don't be uneasy. I can see he likes you very well."

A few days afterwards I called on Davies, and asked him if he thought I might take the liberty of waiting on Mr. Johnson. He said I certainly might, and that Mr. Johnson would take it as a compliment. His Chambers were on the first floor of No. 1, Inner-Temple-lane, and I entered them with an impression given me by the Reverend Dr. Blair, who described his having "found the Giant in his den." At this time the controversy concerning the pieces published by Mr. James Macpherson, as translations of Ossian, was at its height. Johnson had all along denied their authenticity; and, what was still more provoking to their admirers, maintained that they had no merit. The subject having been introduced by Dr. Fordyce, Dr. Blair, relying on the internal evidence of their antiquity, asked Dr. Johnson whether he thought any man of

a modern age could have written such poems? Johnson replied, "Yes, Sir, many men, many women, and many children." Johnson at this time, did not know that Dr. Blair had just published a Dissertation, not only defending their authenticity, but seriously ranking them with the poems of Homer and Virgil; and when he was afterwards informed of this circumstance, he expressed some displeasure at Dr. Fordyce's having suggested the topick, and said. "I am not sorry that they got thus much for their pains. Sir, it was like leading one to talk of a book, when the authour is concealed behind the door."

He received me very courteously: but it must be confessed that his apartment, and furniture, and morning dress, were sufficiently uncouth. His brown suit of cloaths looked very rusty: he had on a little old shrivelled unpowdered wig, which was too small for his head; his shirt-neck and knees of his breeches were loose; his black worsted stockings ill drawn up; and he had a pair of unbuckled shoes by way of slippers. But all these slovenly particularities were forgotten the moment that he began to talk. Some gentlemen, whom I do not recollect, were sitting with him; when I rose, he said to me, "Nay, don't go."—"Sir, (said I), I am afraid that I intrude upon you. It is benevolent to allow me to sit and hear you." He seemed pleased with this compliment, which I sincerely paid him, and answered, "Sir, I am obliged to any man who visits me."

He said: "Christopher Smart, before his confinement, used for exercise to walk to the alehouse; but he was *carried* back again. I did not think he ought to be shut up. His infirmities were not noxious to society. He insisted on people praying with him; and I'd as lief pray with Kit Smart as any one else. Another charge was, that he did not love clean linen; and I have no passion for it."

He generally went abroad at four in the afternoon, and seldom came home till two in the morning. I took the liberty to ask if he did not think it wrong to live thus, and not make more use of his great talents. He owned it was a bad habit.

I had learnt that his place of frequent resort was the Mitre tavern in Fleet-street, where he loved to sit up late, and I begged I might be allowed to pass an evening with him there soon, which he promised I should. A few days afterwards I met him near Temple-bar, about one o'clock in the morning, and asked him if he would then go to the Mitre. "Sir, (said he) it is too late; they won't let us in. But I'll go with you another night with all my heart."

Happening to dine at Clifton's eating-house, in Butcher-row, I was surprised to perceive Johnson come in and take his seat at another table. He agreed to meet me in the evening at the Mitre. I called on him, and we went thither at nine. We had a good supper, and port wine, of which he then sometimes drank a bottle. The orthodox high-church sound of the MITRE, — the figure and manner of the celebrated SAMUEL JOHNSON, — the extraordinary power and precision of his conversation, and the pride arising from finding myself admitted as his companion, produced a variety of sensations, and a pleasing elevation of mind beyond what I had ever before experienced.

"Sir, I do not think Gray a first-rate poet.° He has not a bold imagination, nor much command of words. The obscurity in which he has involved himself will not persuade us that he is sublime. His Elegy in a church-yard has a happy selection of images, but I don't like what are called his great things. His ode which begins

> 'Ruin seize thee, ruthless King,
> Confusion on thy banners wait!'

has been celebrated for its abruptness, and plunging into the subject all at once. But such arts as these have no merit, unless when they are original. We admire them only once; and this abruptness has nothing new in it. We have had it often before. Nay, we have it in the old song of Johnny Armstrong:

> 'Is there ever a man in all Scotland,
> From the highest estate to the lowest degree, &c.' "

I acknowledged, that though educated very strictly in the principles of religion, I had for some time been misled into a certain degree of infidelity; but that I was come now to a better way of thinking. He called to me with warmth, "Give me your hand; I have taken a liking to you."

"For my part, Sir, I think all Christians, whether Papists or Protestants, agree in the essential articles, and that their differences are trivial, and rather political than religious."

We talked of belief in ghosts. He said, "Sir, I make a distinction between what a man may experience by the mere strength of his imagination, and what imagination cannot possibly produce. Thus, suppose I should think I saw a form, and heard a voice cry, 'Johnson, you are a very wicked fellow, and unless you repent you will certainly be punished;' my own unworthiness is so deeply impressed upon my mind, that I might *imagine* I thus saw and heard, and therefore I should not believe that an external communication had been made to me. But if a form should appear, and a voice should tell me that a particular man had died at a particular place, and a particular hour, a fact which I had no apprehension of, nor any means of knowing, and this fact, with all its circumstances, should afterwards be unquestionably proved, I should, in that case, be persuaded that I had supernatural intelligence imparted to me."

Here it is proper, once for all, to give a true and fair statement of Johnson's way of thinking upon the question, whether departed spirits are ever permitted to appear in this world, or in any way to operate upon human life. He has been ignorantly misrepresented as weakly credulous upon that subject. Churchill in his poem entitled "The Ghost," drew a caricature of him under the name of "Pomposo,"[°] representing him as one of the believers of the story of a Ghost in Cock-lane, which, in the year 1762, had gained very general credit in London. Many of my readers, I am convinced, are to this hour under an impression that Johnson was thus foolishly deceived. It will therefore surprize them a good deal when they are informed upon undoubted authority, that Johnson was one of

those by whom the imposture was detected. The story had become so popular, that he thought it should be investigated. After the gentlemen who went and examined into the evidence were satisfied of its falsity, Johnson wrote in their presence an account of it, which was published in the newspapers and Gentleman's Magazine, and undeceived the world.°

I mentioned Mallet's tragedy of "ELVIRA." JOHNSON. "You *may* abuse a tragedy, though you cannot write one. You may scold a carpenter who has made you a bad table, though you cannot make a table. It is not your trade to make tables."

He proceeded: "Your going abroad, Sir, and breaking off idle habits, may be of great importance to you. I would go where there are courts and learned men. There is a good deal of Spain that has not been perambulated. A man of inferiour talents to yours may furnish us with useful observations upon that country."

Dr. Oliver Goldsmith had sagacity enough to cultivate assiduously the acquaintance of Johnson, and his faculties were gradually enlarged by the contemplation of such a model. No man had the art of displaying with more advantage as a writer, whatever literary acquisitions he made. "*Nihil quod tetigit non ornavit.*" His mind resembled a fertile, but thin soil. There was a quick, but not a strong vegetation, of whatever chanced to be thrown upon it. No deep root could be struck. The oak of the forest did not grow there; but the elegant shrubbery and the fragrant parterre appeared in gay succession. It has been generally circulated and believed that he was a mere fool in conversation, but, in truth, this has been greatly exaggerated. He had, no doubt, a more than common share of that hurry of ideas which we often find in his countrymen, and which sometimes produces a laughable confusion in expressing them. He was very much what the French call *un étourdi*,° and from vanity and an eager desire of being conspicuous wherever he was, he frequently talked carelessly without knowledge of the subject, or even without thought. His person was short, his countenance coarse and vulgar, his deportment that of a scholar

awkwardly affecting the easy gentleman. Those who were in any way distinguished, excited envy in him to so ridiculous an excess, that the instances of it are hardly credible. When accompanying two beautiful young ladies with their mother on a tour in France, he was seriously angry that more attention was paid to them than to him; and once at the exhibition of the *Fantoccini* in London, when those who sat next him observed with what dexterity a puppet was made to toss a pike, he could not bear that it should have such praise, and exclaimed with some warmth, "Pshaw! I can do it better myself." When he began to rise into notice, he said he had a brother who was Dean of Durham, a fiction so easily detected that it is wonderful how he should have been so inconsiderate as to hazard it. He told me that he had sold a novel for four hundred pounds. This was his *Vicar of Wakefield*. But Johnson informed me, that he had made the bargain for Goldsmith, and the price was sixty pounds.

The history of Goldsmith's situation and Johnson's friendly interference, I shall give authentically from Johnson's own exact narration:

"I received one morning a message from poor Goldsmith that he was in great distress, and as it was not in his power to come to me, begging that I would come to him as soon as possible. I sent him a guinea, and promised to come to him directly. I accordingly went as soon as I was dress, and found that his landlady had arrested him for his rent, at which he was in a violent passion. I perceived that he had already changed my guinea, and had got a bottle of Madeira and a glass before him. I put the cork into the bottle, desired he would be calm, and began to talk to him of the means by which he might be extricated. He then told me that he had a novel ready for the press, which he produced to me. I looked into it, and saw its merit; told the landlady I should soon return, and having gone to a bookseller, sold it for sixty pounds. I brought Goldsmith the money, and he discharged his rent, not without rating his landlady in a high tone for having used him so ill."

Goldsmith had increased my admiration of the goodness of Johnson's heart, by incidental remarks, such as, when I mentioned Mr. Levet, whom he entertained under his roof, "He is poor and honest, which is recommendation enough to Johnson;" and "He is now become miserable, and that insures the protection of Johnson."

Bonnell Thornton had just published a burlesque "Ode on St. Cecilia's day, adapted to the ancient British musick, viz., the salt-box, the jews-harp, the marrow-bones and cleaver, the hum-strum or hurdy-gurdy, &c." Johnson praised its humour, and seemed much diverted with it. He repeated the following passage:

> "In strains more exalted the salt-box shall join,
> And clattering and battering and clapping combine;
> With a rap and a tap while the hollow side sounds,
> Up and down leaps the flap, and with rattling rebounds."

At this time *Miss* Williams had so much of his attention, that he every night drank tea with her before he went home, however late it might be, and she always sat up for him. Dr. Goldsmith, being a privileged man, went with him this night, strutting away, and calling to me with an air of superiority, like that of an esoterick over an exoterick disciple of a sage of antiquity, "I go to see Miss Williams." I confess, I then envied him this mighty privilege, of which he seemed so proud; but it was not long before I obtained the same mark of distinction.

Talking of London, he observed, "Sir, if you wish to have a just notion of the magnitude of this city, you must not be satisfied with seeing its great streets and squares, but must survey the innumerable little lanes and courts. It is not in the showy evolutions of buildings, but in the multiplicity of human habitations which are crowded together, that the wonderful immensity of London consists."

He was engaged to sup with me at my lodgings. But my landlord having behaved very rudely to me, I had resolved not to remain another night in his house. I went to Johnson in the morning, and talked of it as of a serious distress. He laughed, and said, "Consider, Sir, how insignificant this will

appear a twelvemonth hence. There is nothing (continued he) in this mighty misfortune; nay, we shall be better at the Mitre. But, if your landlord could hold you to your bargain, and the lodgings should be yours for a year, you may certainly use them as you think fit. So, Sir, you may quarter two life-guardsmen upon him; or you may send the greatest scoundrel you can find into your apartments; or you may say that you want to make some experiments in natural philosophy, and may burn a large quantity of assafœtida in his house."

Goldsmith, as usual, endeavoured, with too much eagerness, to *shine*, and disputed very warmly with Johnson against the well known maxim of the British constitution, "the King can do no wrong." JOHNSON. "Sir, you are to consider, that in our constitution, the King is the head, he is supreme: he is above every thing, and there is no power by which he can be tried. Redress is always to be had against oppression, by punishing the immediate agents. And then, Sir, there is this consideration, that *if the abuse be enormous, Nature will rise up, and claiming her original rights, overturn a corrupt political system.*"

"Great abilities (said he) are not requisite for an Historian;" for in historical composition, all the greatest powers of the human mind are quiescent. He has facts ready to his hand; so there is no exercise of invention. Imagination is not required in any high degree; only about as much as is used in the lower kinds of poetry. Some penetration, accuracy, and colouring, will fit a man for the task, if he can give the application which is necessary."

Mr. Ogilvie observed, that Scotland had a great many noble wild prospects. JOHNSON. "I believe, Sir, you have a great many. Norway, too, has noble wild prospects; and Lapland is remarkable for prodigious noble wild prospects. But, Sir, let me tell you, the noblest prospect which a Scotchman ever sees, is the high road that leads him to England!" This unexpected and pointed sally produced a roar of applause.

It happening to be a very rainy night, I made some com-

mon-place observations on the relaxation of nerves and depression of spirits which such weather occasioned; adding, however, that it was good for the vegetable creation. Johnson, who, as we have already seen, denied that the temperature of the air had any influence on the human frame, answered, with a smile of ridicule, "Why, yes, Sir, it is good for vegetables, and for the animals who eat those vegetables, and for the animals who eat those animals." This observation of his aptly enough introduced a good supper.

He enlarged very convincingly upon the excellence of rhyme over blank verse in English poetry. I mentioned to him that Dr. Adam Smith had maintained the same opinion strenuously. JOHNSON. "Sir, I was once in company with Smith, and we did not take to each other; but had I known that he loved rhyme as much as you tell me he does, I should have HUGGED him."

He said, "It is always easy to be on the negative side. If a man were now to deny that there is salt upon the table, you could not reduce him to an absurdity. Come, let us try this a little further. I deny that Canada is taken, and I can support my denial by pretty good arguments. The French are a much more numerous people than we; and it is not likely that they would allow us to take it. 'But the ministry have assured us, in all the formality of the *Gazette*, that it is taken.' — Very true. But the ministry have put us to an enormous expence by the war in America, and it is their interest to persuade us that we have got something for our money. — 'But the fact is confirmed by thousands of men who were at the taking of it.' — Ay, but these men have still more interest in deceiving us. They don't want that you should think the French have beat them, but that they have beat the French. Now suppose you should go over and find that it really is taken, that would only satisfy yourself; for when you come home we will not believe you. We will say, you have been bribed. Yet, Sir, notwithstanding all those plausible objections, we have no doubt that Canada is really ours. Such is the weight of common testimony."

Numerous reflections had been thrown out against him on account of his having accepted a pension from his present Majesty. "Why, Sir (said he, with a hearty laugh), it is a mighty foolish noise that they make. I have accepted of a pension as a reward which has been thought due to my literary merit: and now that I have this pension, I am the same man in every respect that I have ever been; I retain the same principles. It is true, that I cannot now curse (smiling) the House of Hanover; nor would it be decent for me to drink King James's health in the wine that King George gives me money to pay for. But, Sir, I think that the pleasure of cursing the House of Hanover, and drinking King James' health, are amply overbalanced by three hundred pounds a year."

I heard him once say, "that after the death of a violent Whig, with whom he used to contend with great eagerness, he felt his Toryism much abated." He said of Jacobitism:

"A Jacobite is neither an Atheist nor a Deist. That cannot be said of a Whig; for *Whiggism is a negation of all principle.*"

He was of Lord Essex's opinion, "rather to go a hundred miles to speak with one wise man, than five miles to see a fair town."

A person maintained that there was no distinction between virtue and vice. JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, if the fellow does not think as he speaks, he is lying. But if he does really think that there is no distinction between virtue and vice, why, Sir, when he leaves our houses let us count our spoons."

He recommended to me to keep a journal of my life, full and unreserved. He counselled me to keep it private, and said I might surely have a friend who would burn it in case of my death. "There is nothing, Sir, too little for so little a creature as man. It is by studying little things that we attain the great art of having as little misery and as much happiness as possible."

One morning Mr. Dempster happened to call on me. When I complained that drinking port and sitting up late

with him affected my nerves for some time after, he said, "One had better be palsied at eighteen than not keep company with such a man."

Mr. Levet once showed me Dr. Johnson's library, which was contained in two garrets over his Chambers. I found a number of good books, but dusty and in great confusion. The floor was strewed with manuscript leaves, in Johnson's own hand-writing, which I beheld with a degree of veneration, supposing they perhaps might contain portions of the Rambler or of Rasselas. I observed an apparatus for chymical experiments, of which Johnson was all his life very fond. The place seemed to be very favourable for retirement and meditation. Johnson told me, that he went up thither without mentioning it to his servant when he wanted to study, secure from interruption; for he would not allow his servant to say he was not at home when he really was. "A servant's strict regard for truth (said he), must be weakened by such a practice. A philosopher may know that it is merely a form of denial; but few servants are such nice distinguishers. If I accustom a servant to tell a lie for *me*, have I not reason to apprehend that he will tell many lies for *himself*."

JOHNSON. "Pity is not natural to man. Children are always cruel. Savages are always cruel. Pity is acquired and improved by the cultivation of reason. We may have uneasy sensations for seeing a creature in distress, without pity; for we have not pity unless we wish to relieve them."

Rousseau's treatise on the inequality of mankind was at this time a fashionable topick. MR. DEMPSTER. "A wise man ought to value only merit." JOHNSON. "If man were a savage, living in the woods by himself, this might be true; but in civilized society we all depend upon each other, and our happiness is very much owing to the good opinion of mankind. Now, Sir, in civilized society, external advantages make us more respected. A man with a good coat upon his back meets with a better reception than he who has a bad one. Sir, you may analyse this, and say what is there in it? But that will avail you nothing, for it is a part of a general

system. Pound St. Paul's church into atoms, and consider any single atom; it is, to be sure, good for nothing; but, put all these atoms together, and you have St. Paul's church. In civilized society, personal merit will not serve you so much as money will. Sir, you may make the experiment. Go into the street, and give one man a lecture on morality, and another a shilling, and see which will respect you most. Rousseau, and all those who deal in paradoxes, are led away by a childish desire of novelty. When I was a boy, I used always to choose the wrong side of a debate, because most ingenious things, that is to say, most new things, could be said upon it. Sir, there is nothing for which you may not muster up more plausible arguments, than those which are urged against wealth and other external advantages. Why, now, there is stealing; why should it be thought a crime? When I was running about this town a very poor fellow, I was a great arguer for the advantages of poverty; but I was, at the same time, very sorry to be poor. Sir, all the arguments which are brought to represent poverty as no evil, shew it to be evidently a great evil. You never find people labouring to convince you that you may live very happily upon a plentiful fortune." Mr. Dempster having endeavoured to maintain that intrinsick merit *ought* to make the only distinction amongst mankind, Johnson said, "Why, Sir, mankind have found that this cannot be. How shall we determine the proportion of intrinsick merit? Were that to be the only distinction amongst mankind, we should soon quarrel about the degrees of it. Subordination tends greatly to human happiness. Were we all upon an equality, we should have no other enjoyment than mere animal pleasure."

"No man (said Johnson) who ever lived by literature, has lived more independently than I have done." He said he had taken longer time than he needed to have done in composing his Dictionary. He received our compliments upon that great work with complacency, and told us that the Academy *della Crusca* could scarcely believe that it was done by one man.

At night, Mr. Johnson and I supped in a private room at the Turk's Head coffee-house, in the Strand. "I encourage this house (said he), for the mistress of it is a good civil woman, and has not much business."

"Sir, I love the acquaintance of young people; because, in the first place, I don't like to think myself growing old. In the next place, young acquaintances must last longest, if they do last; and then, Sir, young men have more virtue than old men; they have more generous sentiments in every respect. I love the young dogs of this age, they have more wit and humour and knowledge of life than we had; but then the dogs are not so good scholars. Sir, in my early years I read very hard. It is a sad reflection but a true one, that I knew almost as much at eighteen as I do now. My judgement, to be sure, was not so good; but I had all the facts.

"I would behave to a nobleman as I should expect he would behave to me, were I a nobleman and he Sam Johnson. Sir, there is one Mrs. Macaulay° in this town, a great republican. One day when I was at her house I put on a very grave countenance, and said to her, 'Madam, I am now become a convert to your way of thinking. I am convinced that all mankind are upon an equal footing; and to give you an unquestionable proof, Madam, that I am in earnest, here is a very sensible, civil, well-behaved fellow-citizen, your footman; I desire that he may be allowed to sit down and dine with us.' Thus, Sir, shewed her the absurdity of the levelling doctrine. She has never liked me since. Sir, your levellers wish to level *down* as far as themselves; but they cannot bear levelling *up* to themselves."

He said, he would go to the Hebrides with me, unless some very good companion should offer when I was absent, which he did not think probable; adding, "There are few people whom I take so much to as you."

We talked of the education of children; and I asked him what he thought was best to teach them first. JOHNSON. "Sir, it is no matter what you teach them first, any more than what leg you shall put into your breeches first. Sir,

you may stand disputing which is best to put in first, but in the mean time your breech is bare. Sir, while you are considering which of two things you should teach your child first, another boy has learnt them both."

"I have no more pleasure in hearing a man attempting wit and failing, than in seeing a man trying to leap over a ditch and tumbling into it."

"Why, Sir, Sherry° is dull, naturally dull; but it must have taken him a great deal of pains to become what we now see him. Such an excess of stupidity, Sir, is not in Nature."

"Sir, what influence can Mr. Sheridan have upon the language of this great country, by his narrow exertions? Sir, it is burning a farthing candle at Dover, to shew light at Calais."

"Sir, I honour Derrick for his presence of mind. One night, when Floyd, another poor authour, was wandering about the streets in the night, he found Derrick fast asleep upon a bulk; upon being suddenly waked, Derrick started up, 'My dear Floyd, I am sorry to see you in this destitute state: will you go home with me to *my lodgings?*' "

I again begged his advice as to my method of study at Utrecht. "Come, (said he) let us make a day of it. Let us go down to Greenwich and dine, and talk of it there."

Dr. Johnson and I took a sculler at the Temple stairs, and set out for Greenwich. I asked him if he really thought a knowledge of the Greek and Latin languages an essential requisite to a good education. JOHNSON. "Most certainly, Sir." "And yet, (said I) people go through the world very well, and carry on the business of life to good advantage, without learning." JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, that may be true in cases where learning cannot possibly be of any use; for instance, this boy rows us as well without learning, as if he could sing the song of Orpheus to the Argonauts, who were the first sailors." He then called to the boy, "What would you give, my lad, to know about the Argonauts?" "Sir (said the boy), I would give what I have." Johnson was much pleased with his answer, and we gave him a double fare. Dr. Johnson then turning to me, "Sir (said he), a desire of know-

ledge is the natural feeling of mankind; and every human being, whose mind is not debauched, will be willing to give all that he has, to get knowledge." We landed at the Old Swan, and walked to Billingsgate, where we took oars and moved smoothly along the silver Thames. It was a very fine day. We were entertained with the immense number and variety of ships that were lying at anchor, and with the beautiful country on each side of the river.

I talked of preaching, and of the great success which those called methodists have. JOHNSON. "Sir, it is owing to their expressing themselves in a plain and familiar manner. To insist against drunkenness as a crime, because it debases reason, the noblest faculty of man, would be of no service to the common people; but to tell them that they may die in a fit of drunkenness, and shew them how dreadful that would be, cannot fail to make a deep impression." Sir, when your Scotch clergy give up their homely manner, religion will soon decay in that country." Let this observation, as Johnson meant it, be ever remembered.

He remarked that the structure of Greenwich hospital was too magnificent for a place of charity, and that its parts were too much detached, to make one great whole.

He spoke with enthusiasm of the beauty of Latin verse. "All the modern languages (said he) cannot furnish so melodious a line as

"Formosam resonare doces Amarillida silvas."

Afterwards he entered upon the business of the day, which was to give me his advice as to a course of study. I recollect with admiration an animating blaze of eloquence, which roused every intellectual power in me to the highest pitch. He ran over the grand scale of human knowledge; advised me to select some particular branch to excel in, but to acquire a little of every kind.

We walked in the evening in Greenwich Park. He asked me "Is not this very fine?" I answered, "Yes, Sir; but not equal to Fleet-street." JOHNSON. "You are right, Sir."

A very fashionable Baronet, on his attention being called to the fragrance of a May evening in the country, observed, "This may be very well; but for my part, I prefer the smell of a flambeau at the play-house."

Our sail up the river, in our return to London, was by no means so pleasant as in the morning; for the night air was so cold that it made me shiver. I was the more sensible of it from having sat up all the night before recollecting and writing in my Journal. I remember having sat up four nights in one week. Johnson, whose robust frame was not in the least affected by the cold, scolded me, as if my shivering had been a paltry effeminacy, saying, "Why do you shiver?" Sir William Scott, of the Commons, told me, that when he complained of a head-ache in the post-chaise, as they were travelling together to Scotland, Johnson treated him in the same manner: "At your age, Sir, I had no head-ache." We concluded the day at the Turk's Head coffee-house very socially.

At a meeting of the people called Quakers, I had heard a woman preach. JOHNSON. "Sir, a woman's preaching is like a dog's walking on his hind legs. It is not done well; but you are surprised to find it done at all."

He said, that "he always felt an inclination to do nothing." I observed, that it was strange to think that the most indolent man in Britain had written the most laborious work, The English Dictionary.

I had now made good my title to be a privileged man and was carried by him in the evening to drink tea with Miss Williams. She was well acquainted with his habits, and knew how to lead him on to talk. After tea he carried me to what he called his walk, which was a long narrow paved court in the neighbourhood, overshadowed by some trees. I mentioned to him how common it was in the world to tell absurd stories of him and to ascribe to him very strange sayings. JOHNSON. "What do they make me say, Sir?" BOSWELL. "Why, Sir, (laughing heartily as I spoke) David Hume told me, you said that you would stand before a battery of cannon

to restore the Convocation to its full powers." — Little did I apprehend that he had actually said this: but I was soon convinced of my errour; for, with a determined look, he thundered out, "And would I not, Sir? Shall the Presbyterian Kirk ° of Scotland have its General Assembly, and the Church of England be denied its Convocation?" He was walking up and down the room, while I told him the anecdote; but when he uttered this explosion of high-church zeal, he had come close to my chair, and his eye flashed with indignation.

In the Harwich stage-coach, a fat elderly gentlewoman, and a young Dutchman, seemed the most inclined among us to conversation. At the inn where we dined, the gentlewoman said that she had done her best to educate her children; and, particularly, that she had never suffered them to be a moment idle. JOHNSON. "I wish, Madam, you would educate me too; for I have been an idle fellow all my life." "I am sure, Sir, (said she) you have not been idle." JOHNSON. "Nay, Madam, it is very true; and that gentleman there, (pointing to me,) has been idle. He was idle at Edinburgh. His father sent him to Glasgow, where he continued to be idle. He then came to London, where he has been very idle; and now he is going to Utrecht, where he will be as idle as ever." I asked him privately how he could expose me so. JOHNSON. "Poh, poh! (said he) they knew nothing about you, and will think of it no more." To the utter astonishment of all the passengers but myself, who knew that he could talk upon any side of a question, he defended the Inquisition. Having observed at one of the stages that I ostentatiously gave a shilling to the coachman, when the custom was for each passenger to give only six-pence, he took me aside and scolded me, saying that what I had done would make the coachman dissatisfied with all the rest of the passengers who gave him no more than his due.

When at table, he was totally absorbed in the business of the moment; his looks seemed riveted to his plate: nor would he, unless when in very high company, say one word,

or even pay the least attention to what was said by others, till he had satisfied his appetite: which was so fierce, and indulged with such intenseness, that while in the act of eating, the veins of his forehead swelled, and generally a strong perspiration was visible. To those whose sensations were delicate, this could not but be disgusting. Johnson, though he could be rigidly *abstemious*, was not a *temperate* man. I remember when he was in Scotland, his praising "*Gordon's palates*," with a warmth of expression which might have done honour to more important subjects. "As for Maclaurin's imitation of a *made dish*, it was a wretched attempt." He about the same time was so much displeased with the performances of a nobleman's French cook, that he exclaimed with vehemence, "I'd throw such a rascal into the river;" and he then proceeded to alarm a lady at whose house he was to sup, by the following manifesto of his skill: "I, Madam, who live at a variety of good tables, am a much better judge of cookery, than any person who has a very tolerable cook, but lives much at home; for his palate is gradually adapted to the taste of his cook: whereas, Madam, in trying by a wider range, I can more exquisitely judge." When invited to dine, even with an intimate friend, he was not pleased if something better than a plain dinner was not prepared for him. I have heard him say on such an occasion, "This was a good dinner enough, to be sure: but it was not a dinner to *ask* a man to." One day when he had dined with his neighbour and landlord, in Bolt-court, Mr. Allen, the printer, whose old housekeeper had studied his taste in every thing, he pronounced this eulogy: "Sir, we could not have had a better dinner had there been a *Synod of Cooks*." °

Johnson said, "I never considered whether I should be a grave man, or a merry man, but just let inclination, for the time, have its course." We stood talking for some time together of Bishop Berkeley's ingenious sophistry to prove the non-existence of matter, and that every thing in the universe is merely ideal. I observed, that though we are satisfied his doctrine is not true, it is impossible to refute it.

I never shall forget the alacrity with which Johnson answered, striking his foot with mighty force against a large stone till he rebounded from it, — "I refute it *thus*." To me it is not conceivable how Berkeley can be answered by pure reasoning; but I know that the nice and difficult task was to have been undertaken by one of the most luminous minds ° of the present age, had not politicks "turned him from calm philosophy aside."

My revered friend walked down with me to the beach, where we embraced and parted with tenderness, and engaged to correspond by letters.

To Boswell.

"There lurks, perhaps, in every human heart a desire of distinction which inclines every man first to hope, and then to believe, that nature has given him something peculiar to himself. Every desire is a viper in the bosom, who, while he was chill, was harmless; but when warmth gave him strength, exerted it in poison. You know a gentleman, who, when first he set his foot in the gay world, imagined a total indifference and universal negligence to be the strongest indication of an airy temper and a quick apprehension. He tried this scheme of life awhile, was made weary of it by his sense and his virtue; he then wished to return to his studies; and finding long habits of idleness and pleasure harder to be cured than he expected, concluded that Nature had originally formed him incapable of rational employment. Resolve, and keep your resolution; choose, and pursue your choice.

Sam. Johnson."

To a lady who endeavoured to vindicate herself from blame for neglecting social attention to worthy neighbours, by saying, "I would go to them if it would do them any good;" he said, "What good, Madam, do you expect to have in your power to do them? It is shewing them respect, and that is doing them good."

So socially accommodating was he, that once when Mr.

Langton and he were driving together in a coach, and Mr. Langton complained of being sick, he insisted that they should go out, and sit on the back of it in the open air, which they did. And being sensible how strange the appearance must be, observed, that a countryman whom they saw in a field would probably be thinking, "If these two madmen should come down, what would become of me?"

Soon after his return to London, which was in February, 1764, was founded that CLUB which existed long without a name, but at Mr. Garrick's funeral became distinguished by the title of THE LITERARY CLUB.° Sir Joshua Reynolds had the merit of being the first proposer of it, to which Johnson acceded; and the original members were, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Dr. Johnson, Mr. Edmund Burke, Dr. Nugent, Mr. Beauclerk, Mr. Langton, Dr. Goldsmith, Mr. Chamier, and Sir John Hawkins. They met at the Turk's Head, in Gerrard-street, Soho, one evening in every week, at seven, and generally continued their conversation till a pretty late hour. This club has been gradually increased to its present number, thirty-five. After about ten years, instead of supping weekly, it was resolved to dine together once a fortnight during the meeting of Parliament. Their original tavern having been converted into a private house, they moved first to Prince's in Sackville-street, then to Le Telier's in Dover-street and now meet at Parsloe's, St. James's-street.

Sir John Hawkins ° represents himself as a "*seceder.*" The fact was, that he one evening attacked Mr. Burke, in so rude a manner, that all the company testified their displeasure; and at their next meeting his reception was such, that he never came again.

Not very long after the institution of our club, Sir Joshua Reynolds was speaking of it to Garrick. "I like it much, (said he,) I think I shall be of you." Dr. Johnson was much displeased with the actor's conceit. "*He'll be of us,* (said Johnson) how does he know we will *permit* him? The first Duke in England has no right to hold such language." However, when Garrick was regularly proposed, Johnson

warmly and kindly supported him, and he was accordingly elected.

He had a particularity, of which none of his friends even ventured to ask an explanation. This was his anxious care to go out or in at a door or passage, by a certain number of steps from a certain point, or at least so as that either his right or his left foot, (I am not certain which,) should constantly make the first actual movement when he came close to the door or passage. Thus I conjecture: for I have, upon innumerable occasions, observed him suddenly stop, and then seem to count his steps with a deep earnestness; and when he had neglected or gone wrong in this sort of magical movement, I have seen him go back again, put himself in a proper posture to begin the ceremony, and, having gone through it, break from his abstraction, walk briskly on and join his companion. Sir Joshua Reynolds has observed him to go a good way about rather than cross a particular alley in Leicester-fields.

While talking or even musing as he sat in his chair, he commonly held his head to one side towards his right shoulder, and shook it in a tremulous manner, moving his body backwards and forwards, and rubbing his left knee in the same direction, with the palm of his hand. In the intervals of articulating he made various sounds with his mouth; sometimes as if ruminating, or what is called chewing the cud, sometimes giving a half whistle, sometimes making his tongue play backwards from the roof of his mouth, as if clucking like a hen, and sometimes protruding it against his upper gums in front, as if pronouncing quickly under his breath, *too, too, too:* all this accompanied sometimes with a thoughtful look, but more frequently with a smile. Generally when he had concluded a period, in the course of a dispute, by which time he was a good deal exhausted by violence and vociferation, he used to blow out his breath like a whale, a contemptuous mode of expression, as if he had made the arguments of his opponent fly like chaff before the wind.

He paid a short visit to the University of Cambridge, with his friend Mr. Beauclerk. There is a lively picturesque ac-

count of his behaviour in the Gentleman's Magazine for March 1785. "He drank his large potations of tea, interrupted by many an indignant contradiction, and many a noble sentiment." — "Several persons got into his company the last evening at Trinity, where, about twelve, he began to be very great; stripped poor Mrs. Macaulay to the very skin, then gave her for his toast, and drank her in two bumpers."

In his diary: "July 2. I paid Mr. Simpson ten guineas, which he had formerly lent me in my necessity, and for which Tetty expressed her gratitude."

"July 8. I lent Mr. Simpson ten guineas more."

Trinity College, Dublin, at this time surprised Johnson with a spontaneous compliment of the highest academical honours, by creating him Doctor of Laws. His "Prayer before the Study of Law:"

"Almighty God, the giver of wisdom, without whose help resolutions are vain, without whose blessings study is ineffectual; enable me, if it be thy will, to attain such knowledge as may qualify me to direct the doubtful and instruct the ignorant; to prevent wrongs and terminate contentions."

His prayer in the view of becoming a politician is entitled, "Engaging in Politicks with H—n," no doubt, his friend, the Right Honourable William Gerard Hamilton, to whose conversation he once paid this high compliment: "I am very unwilling to be left alone, Sir, and therefore I go with my company down the first pair of stairs, in some hopes that they may, perhaps, return again; I go with you, Sir, as far as the street-door." His prayer is in general terms: "Enlighten my understanding with knowledge of right, and govern my will by thy laws, that no deceit may mislead me, nor temptation corrupt me; that I may always endeavour to do good, and hinder evil."

This year, 1765, was distinguished by his being introduced into the family of Mr. Thrale,° one of the most eminent brewers in England, and member of Parliament for the borough of Southwark. Johnson used to give this account of the rise of Mr. Thrale's father: "He worked at six shillings a week for

twenty years in the great brewery, which afterwards was his own. The proprietor of it had an only daughter, who was married to a nobleman. It was not fit that a peer should continue the business. It was suggested, that it would be advisable to treat with Thrale, a sensible, active, honest man, who had been employed in the house, and to transfer the whole to him for thirty thousand pounds, security being taken upon the property. This was accordingly settled. In eleven years Thrale paid the purchase-money. He acquired a large fortune, and lived to be a member of Parliament for Southwark. But what was most remarkable was the liberality with which he used his riches. He gave his son and daughters the best education. He used to say, 'If this young dog does not find so much after I am gone as he expects, let him remember that he has had a great deal in my own time.'" The son, though in affluent circumstances, had good sense enough to carry on his father's trade, which was of such extent, that I remember he once told me, he would not quit it for an annuity of ten thousand a year.

Mr. Thrale had married Miss Hester Lynch Salusbury, of good Welch extraction, a lady of lively talents, improved by education. That Johnson's introduction into Mr. Thrale's family, which contributed so much to the happiness of his life, was owing to her desire for his conversation, is a very probable and the general supposition: but it is not the truth. Mr. Murphy, who was intimate with Mr. Thrale, having spoken very highly of Dr. Johnson, he was requested to make them acquainted. This being mentioned to Johnson, he accepted of an invitation to dinner at Thrale's, and was so much pleased with his reception, both by Mr. and Mrs. Thrale, and they so much pleased with him, that his invitations to their house were more and more frequent, till at last he became one of the family, and an apartment was appropriated to him, both in their house at Southwark and in their villa at Streatham.

"I know no man, (said he,) who is more master of his wife and family than Thrale. If he but holds up a finger, he is obeyed. It is a great mistake to suppose that she is

above him in literary attainments. She is more flippant; but he has ten times her learning: he is a regular scholar; but her learning is that of a school-boy in one of the lower forms." My readers may naturally wish for some representation of the figures of this couple. Mr. Thrale was tall, well proportioned, and stately. As for *Madam*, or *my Mistress*, by which epithets Johnson used to mention Mrs. Thrale, she was short, plump, and brisk. She has herself given us a lively view of the idea which Johnson had of her person, on her appearing before him in a dark-coloured gown: "You little creatures should never wear those sort of clothes, however; they are unsuitable in every way. What! have not all insects gay colours?"

Nothing could be more fortunate for Johnson than this connection. He had at Mr. Thrale's all the comforts and even luxuries of life: his melancholy was diverted, and his irregular habits lessened by association with an agreeable and well-ordered family. He was treated with the utmost respect, and even affection. The vivacity of Mrs. Thrale's literary talk roused him to cheerfulness and exertion, even when they were alone. But this was not often the case; for he found here a constant succession of what gave him the highest enjoyment, the society of the learned, the witty, and the eminent in every way.

He at length gave to the world his edition of Shakspeare. A blind indiscriminate admiration of Shakspeare had exposed the British nation to the ridicule of foreigners. Johnson, by candidly admitting the faults of his poet, had the more credit in bestowing on him deserved and indisputable praise; and doubtless none of all his panegyrists have done him half so much honour. His Shakspeare was virulently attacked by Mr. William Kenrick, who wrote for the booksellers in a great variety of branches. When some of his works were mentioned, Dr. Goldsmith said he had never heard of them; upon which Dr. Johnson observed, "Sir, he is one of the many who have made themselves *publick*, without making themselves *known*."

From one of his Journals I transcribed what follows:

"At church, Oct. —65.

"To avoid all singularity.

"To come in before service, and compose my mind by meditation, or by reading some portions of scripture. *Tetty.*

"If I can hear the sermon, to attend it, unless attention be more troublesome than useful.

"To consider the act of prayer as a reposal of myself upon God, and a resignation of all into his holy hand."

In writing Dedications, that courtly species of composition, no man excelled Dr. Johnson. Though the loftiness of his mind prevented him from ever dedicating in his own person, he wrote a very great number of Dedications for others. He told me, a great many years ago, "he believed he had dedicated to all the Royal Family round."

I found Dr. Johnson in a good house in Johnson's court, Fleet-street, in which he had accommodated Miss Williams with an apartment on the ground floor, while Mr. Levet occupied his post in the garret: his faithful Francis was still attending upon him. He said of Goldsmith's "Traveller," which had been published in my absence, "There has not been so fine a poem since Pope's time."

He at my request marked with a pencil the lines which he had furnished, which are only line 420th,

> "To stop too fearful, and too faint to go;"

and the concluding ten lines, except the last couplet but one.

Dr. Johnson at the same time favoured me by marking the lines which he furnished to Goldsmith's "Deserted Village," which are only the last four:

> "That trade's proud empire hastes to swift decay,
> As ocean sweeps the labour'd mole away:
> While self-dependent power can time defy,
> As rocks resist the billows and the sky."

I mentioned that a gay friend had advised me against being a lawyer, because I should be excelled by plodding

blockheads. JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, in the formulary and statutory part of law, a plodding blockhead may excel; but in the ingenious and rational part of it a plodding blockhead can never excel."

JOHNSON. "Sir, I never was near enough to great men to court them. You may be prudently attached to great men, and yet independent. You must not give a shilling's worth of court for sixpence worth of good. But if you can get a shilling's worth of good for sixpence worth of court, you are a fool if you do not pay court."

He said, "If convents should be allowed at all, they should only be retreats for persons unable to serve the publick, or who have served it. It is our first duty to serve society; and, after we have done that, we may attend wholly to the salvation of our own souls. A youthful passion for abstracted devotion should not be encouraged."

Johnson said (sarcastically), "It seems, Sir, you have kept very good company abroad, Rousseau and Wilkes!" ° Thinking it enough to defend one at a time, I said nothing as to my gay friend, but answered with a smile, "My dear Sir, you don't call Rousseau bad company. Do you really think *him* a bad man?" JOHNSON. "Rousseau, Sir, is a very bad man. I would sooner sign a sentence for his transportation, than that of any felon who has gone from the Old Bailey these many years. Yes, I should like to have him work in the plantations." BOSWELL. "Sir, do you think him as bad a man as Voltaire?" JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, it is difficult to settle the proportion of iniquity between them."

Another evening we found him indisposed, "Come then (said Goldsmith), we will not go to the Mitre to-night since we cannot have the big man with us." Johnson then called for a bottle of port, of which Goldsmith and I partook, while our friend, now a water-drinker, sat by us. GOLDSMITH. "I think, Mr. Johnson, you don't go near the theatres now. You give yourself no more concern about a new play, than if you had never had anything to do with the stage." JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, our tastes greatly alter." BOSWELL. "But,

Sir, why don't you give us something in some other way?" GOLDSMITH. "Ay, Sir, we have a claim upon you." JOHNSON. "No, Sir, I am not obliged to do any more. No man is obliged to do as much as he can do. A man is to have part of his life to himself. Now, Sir, the good I can do by my conversation bears the same proportion to the good I can do by my writings that the practice of a physician, retired to a small town, does to his practice in a great city." BOSWELL. "But I wonder, Sir, you have not more pleasure in writing than in not writing." JOHNSON. "Sir, you *may* wonder. I have written a hundred lines in a day. I remember I wrote a hundred lines of 'The Vanity of Human Wishes' in a day. Doctor (turning to Goldsmith), I am not quite idle; I made one line t'other day; but I made no more." GOLDSMITH. "Let us hear it; we'll put a bad one to it." JOHNSON. "No, Sir; I have forgot it."

The following letter to Mr. Langton is of interest:

TO BENNET LANGTON.

"SINCE you will not inform us where you are, of how you live, I know not whether you desire to know any thing of us. However, I will tell you that THE CLUB subsists; but we have the loss of Burke's company since he has been engaged in publick business in which he has gained more reputation than perhaps any man at his [first] appearance ever gained before. He made two speeches in the House for repealing the Stamp-act, which were publickly commended by Mr. Pitt, and have filled the town with wonder.

"Burke is a great man by nature, and is expected soon to attain civil greatness. I am grown greater too, for I have maintained the newspapers these many weeks; and what is greater still, I have risen every morning since New-year's day, at about eight: when I was up, I have indeed done but little; yet it is no slight advancement to obtain for so many hours more, the consciousness of being.

"I wish you were in my new study; I am now writing

my first letter in it. I think it looks very pretty about me.

"THE CLUB holds very well together. Monday is my night. I continue to rise tolerably well, and read more than I did. I hope something will yet come on it. SAM. JOHNSON."

"Do not accustom yourself to enchain your volatility by vows; they will sometime leave a thorn in your mind, which you will, perhaps, never be able to extract or eject. Take this warning; it is of great importance."

Mr. Cuthbert Shaw published the following portrait of Johnson:

> "Here Johnson comes,—unblest with outward grace,
> His rigid morals stamp'd upon his face."

In February, 1767, there happened one of the most remarkable incidents of Johnson's life, which gratified his monarchical enthusiasm, and which he loved to relate with all its circumstances, when requested by his friends. This was his being honoured by a private conversation with his Majesty, in the library at the Queen's house. He had frequently visited those splendid rooms, and noble collection of books. Mr. Barnard, the librarian, took care that he should have here a very agreeable resource at leisure hours.

His Majesty having been informed of his occasional visits, was pleased to signify a desire that he should be told when Dr. Johnson came next to the library.°

His Majesty began by observing, that he understood he came sometimes to the library; then mentioned his having heard that the Doctor had been lately at Oxford, and asked him if he was not fond of going thither. To which Johnson answered, that he was indeed fond of going to Oxford sometimes, but was likewise glad to come back again. He was then asked whether there were better libraries at Oxford or Cambridge. He answered, he believed the Bodleian was larger than any they had at Cambridge; at the same time adding, "I hope, whether we have more books or not than

they have at Cambridge, we shall make as good use of them as they do."

His Majesty enquired if he was then writing any thing. He answered he was not, for he had pretty well told the world what he knew, and must now read to acquire more knowledge. The King, as it should seem with a view to urge him to rely on his own stores as an original writer, and to continue his labours, then said: "I do not think you borrow much from any body." Johnson said, he thought he had already done his part as a writer. "I should have thought so too (said the King), if you had not written so well." When asked at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, whether he made any reply to this high compliment, he answered, "No, Sir. It was not for me to bandy civilities with my Sovereign."

His Majesty then talked of the controversy between Warburton and Lowth, and asked Johnson what he thought of it. Johnson answered, "Warburton has most general, most scholastic learning; Lowth is the more correct scholar. I do not know which of them calls names best." "Why, truly (said the King), when once it comes to calling names, argument is pretty well at an end."

The conversation next turned on the Philosophical Transactions, when Johnson observed that they had now a better method of arranging their materials than formerly. "Ay (said the King), they are obliged to Dr. Johnson for that."

During the whole of this interview, Johnson talked to his Majesty with profound respect, but still in his firm manly manner, with a sonorous voice, and never in that subdued tone which is commonly used at the levee and in the drawing room. After the King withdrew, he said to Mr. Barnard, "Sir, they may talk of the King as they will: but he is the finest gentleman I have ever seen." And he afterwards observed to Mr. Langton, "Sir, his manners are those of as fine a gentleman as we may suppose Lewis the Fourteenth or Charles the Second."

At Sir Joshua Reynolds's, where a circle of Johnson's friends was collected round him to hear his account of this

memorable conversation, he told them, "I found his Majesty wished I should talk, and I made it my business to talk. I find it does a man good to be talked to by his sovereign."

During all the time in which Dr. Johnson was employed in relating to the circle at Sir Joshua Reynolds's the particulars of what passed between the King and him, Dr. Goldsmith remained unmoved upon a sopha at some distance, affecting not to join in the least in the eager curiosity of the company. At length, the frankness, and simplicity of his natural character prevailed. He sprung from the sopha, advanced to Johnson, and in a kind of flutter, from imagining himself in the situation which he had just been hearing described, exclaimed, "Well, you acquitted yourself in this conversation better than I should have done; for I should have bowed and stammered through the whole of it."

He passed three months at Lichfield: and I cannot omit an affecting and solemn scene there, as related by himself:

"Sunday, Oct. 18, 1767. Yesterday, Oct. 17, at about ten in the morning, I took my leave for ever of my dear old friend, Catharine Chambers, who came to live with my mother about 1724, and has been but little parted from us since. She buried my father, my brother, and my mother. She is now fifty-eight years old.

"I desired all to withdraw, then told her that we were to part for ever; that as Christians we should part with prayer; and that I would, if she was willing, say a short prayer beside her. She expressed great desire to hear me; and held up her poor hands as she lay in bed, with great fervour, while I prayed, kneeling by her."

A ridicule of his style, under the title of "Lexiphanes," Sir John Hawkins ascribes to Dr. Kenrick; but its authour was one Campbell, a Scotch purser in the navy. The ridicule consisted in applying Johnson's "words of large meaning," to insignificant matters.

Boswell. "But what do you think of supporting a cause which you know to be bad?" Johnson. "Sir, you do not know it to be good or bad till the judge determines it. I

have said that you are to state facts fairly; so that your thinking, or what you call knowing, a cause to be bad, must be from reasoning, must be from your supposing your arguments to be weak and inconclusive. But, Sir, that is not enough. An argument which does not convince yourself, may convince the Judge to whom you urge it."

He praised Goldsmith's "Good-natured Man"; said, it was the best comedy, that had appeared since "The Provoked Husband," and that there had not been of late any such character exhibited on the stage as that of Croaker. I observed it was the Suspirius of his Rambler. He said, Goldsmith had owned he had borrowed it from thence. "Sir (continued he), there is all the difference in the world between characters of nature and characters of manners; and *there* is the difference between the characters of Fielding and those of Richardson."

"I used once to be sadly plagued with a man who wrote verses, but who literally had no other notion of a verse, but that it consisted of ten syllables. *Lay your knife and your fork, across your plate,* was to him a verse:

Lay yōur knife ānd your fōrk, acrōss your plāte.

As he wrote a great number of verses, he sometimes by chance made good ones, though he did not know it."

He said he had lately been a long while at Lichfield, but had grown very weary before he left it. BOSWELL. "I wonder at that, Sir; it is your native place." JOHNSON. "Why so is Scotland *your* native place."

His prejudice against Scotland appeared remarkably strong at this time. When I talked of our advancement in literature, "Sir (said he), you have learnt a little from us, and you think yourselves very great men. Hume would never have written History, had not Voltaire written it before him. He is an echo of Voltaire." BOSWELL. "But, Sir, we have Lord Kames." JOHNSON. "You *have* Lord Kames. Keep him; ha, ha, ha! We don't envy you him. Do you ever see Dr. Robertson?" BOSWELL. "Yes, Sir." JOHNSON. "Does the dog talk of me?" BOSWELL. "Indeed, Sir, he does,

and loves you." Thinking that I now had him in a corner, and being solicitous for the literary fame of my country, I pressed him for his opinion on the merit of Dr. Robertson's *History of Scotland.* But, to my surprize, he escaped: "Sir, I love Robertson and I won't talk of his book."

An essay, maintaining the future life of brutes, was mentioned, and the doctrine insisted on by a gentleman who seemed fond of curious speculation. Johnson discouraged this talk; and being offended at its continuation, he watched an opportunity to give the gentleman a blow of reprehension. So, when the poor speculatist, with a serious metaphysical pensive face, addressed him, "But really, Sir, when we see a very sensible dog, we don't know what to think of him," Johnson, rolling with joy at the thought which beamed in his eye, turned quickly round, and replied, "True, Sir: and when we see a very foolish *fellow,* we don't know what to think of *him.*" He then rose up, strided to the fire, and stood for some time laughing and exulting.

I asked him if it was not hard that one deviation from chastity should so absolutely ruin a young woman. JOHNSON. "Why no, Sir; it is the great principle which she is taught. When she has given up that, she has given up every notion of female honour and virtue, which are all included in chastity."

A gentleman talked to him of a lady whom he greatly admired and wished to marry, but was afraid of her superiority of talents. "Sir (said he), you need not be afraid; marry her. Before a year goes about, you'll find that reason much weaker, and that wit not so bright."

At this time I observed upon the dial-plate of his watch a short Greek inscription, taken from the New Testament, Νὺξ γὰρ ἔρχεται, "the night cometh when no man can work." He sometime afterwards laid aside this dial-plate. "It might do very well upon a clock which a man keeps in his closet; but to have it upon his watch which he carries about with him, and which is often looked at by others, might be censured as ostentatious."

Asking him explicitly whether it would be improper to publish his letters after his death, his answer was, "Nay, Sir, when I am dead, you may do as you will."

He talked in his usual style with a rough contempt of popular liberty. "They make a rout about *universal* liberty, without considering that all that is to be valued, or indeed can be enjoyed by individuals is *private* liberty. Political liberty is good only so far as it produces private liberty. Now, Sir, there is the liberty of the press, which you know is a constant topick. Suppose you and I and two hundred more were restrained from printing our thoughts: what then? What proportion would that restraint upon us bear to the private happiness of the nation?"

He supped at the Crown and Anchor tavern, in the Strand, with a company whom I collected to meet him. With an excess of prudence, for which Johnson afterwards found fault with them, they hardly opened their lips, and that only to say something which they were certain would not expose them to the sword of Goliath.

Recollecting that Mr. Davies, by acting as an *informer*, had been the occasion of his talking somewhat too harshly to his friend, Dr. Percy, he took an opportunity to give him a hit: so added, with a preparatory laugh, "Why, Sir, Tom Davies might have written the 'Conduct of the Allies.'" Poor Tom being thus suddenly dragged into ludicrous notice in the presence of the Scottish Doctors, to whom he was ambitious of appearing to advantage, was grievously mortified. Nor did his punishment rest here; for upon subsequent occasions, whenever he, "statesman all o'er," assumed a strutting importance, I used to hail him — "*the Authour of the Conduct of the Allies.*"

When I called upon Dr. Johnson next morning, I found him highly satisfied with his colloquial prowess the preceding evening. "Well (said he), we had good talk." BOSWELL. "Yes, Sir, you tossed and gored several persons."

Alexander, Earl of Eglintoune, who loved wit more than wine, and men of genius more than sycophants, had regretted

that Johnson had not been educated with more refinement, and lived more in polished society. "No, no, my Lord (said Signor Baretti), do with him what you would, he would always have been a bear." "True (answered the Earl, with a smile), but he would have been a *dancing* bear." Goldsmith, who knew him well: "Johnson, to be sure, has a roughness in his manner: but no man alive has a more tender heart. *He has nothing of the bear but his skin.*"

I was very sorry that I had not his company with me at the Jubilee,° in honour of Shakspeare, at Stratford-upon-Avon, the great poet's native town. Johnson's connection both with Shakspeare and Garrick founded a double claim to his presence; and it would have been highly gratifying to Mr. Garrick. He would have had a benignant effect on both. When almost every man of eminence in the literary world was happy to partake in this festival of genius, the absence of Johnson could not but be wondered at and regretted.

Johnson wrote me the following letter from Brighthelmstone:

To Boswell

"Your History ° is like other histories, but your Journal is in a very high degree curious and delightful. There is between the history and the journal that difference which there will always be found between notions borrowed from without, and notions generated within. Your history was copied from books; your journal rose out of your own experience and observation.

"I am glad that you are going to be married. I have always loved and valued you, and shall love you and value you still more, as you become more regular and useful: effects which a happy marriage will hardly fail to produce. Sam. Johnson."

On Sept. 30th, we dined together at the Mitre. I attempted to argue for the superior happiness of the Savage State. Johnson said, "No, Sir, you are not to talk such paradox. Let me have no more on't." Boswell. "Sir, e-

times I have been in the humour of wishing to retire to a desart." JOHNSON. "Sir, you have desart enough in Scotland."

He maintained to me contrary to the common notion, that a woman would not be the worse wife for being learned; in which, from all that I have observed of *Artemisias*, I humbly differed from him.

When I censured a gentleman of my acquaintance for marrying a second time, as it shewed a disregard of his first wife, he said "Not at all, Sir. He pays the highest compliment to the first by shewing that she made him so happy as a married man, that he wishes to be so a second time." And yet, on another occasion, he owned that he once had almost asked a promise of Mrs. Johnson that she would not marry again, but had checked himself.

I had the pleasure of seeing Mrs. Thrale at Dr. Johnson's one morning, and had conversation enough with her to admire her talents; and to shew her that I was as Johnsonian as herself. He delivered me a very polite card from Mr. Thrale and her, inviting me to Streatham.

I found, at an elegant villa, six miles from town, every circumstance that can make society pleasing. Johnson, though quite at home, was yet looked up to with an awe, tempered by affection, and seemed to be equally the care of his host and hostess. I rejoiced at seeing him so happy.

Mrs. Thrale praised Garrick's talents for light gay poetry; and, as a specimen, repeated his song in "Florizel and Perdita," and dwelt with peculiar pleasure on this line:

"I'd smile with the simple, and feed with the poor."

JOHNSON. "Nay, my dear Lady, this will never do. Poor David! Smile with the simple; — What folly is that? And who would feed with the poor that can help it? No, no; let me smile with the wise, and feed with the rich." I repeated this sally to Garrick, and wondered to find his sensibility as a writer not a little irritated by it. To soothe him I observed, that Johnson spared none of us; and I quoted the passage in

Horace in which he compares one who attacks his friends for the sake of a laugh, to a pushing ox, that is marked by a bunch of hay put upon his horns: "*fœnum habet in cornu.*" "Ay, (said Garrick, vehemently,) he has a whole *mow* of it."

I presented Dr. Johnson to General Paoli. The General talked of languages being formed on the particular notions and manners of a people, without knowing which, we cannot know the language. "Sir, (said Johnson,) you talk of language, as if you had never done any thing else but study it, instead of governing a nation." The General said, "*Questo e un troppo gran complimento;*" this is too great a compliment. Johnson answered, "I should have thought so, Sir, if I had not heard you talk." The General said, that "a great part of the fashionable infidelity was owing to a desire of showing courage. Men who have no opportunities of shewing it as to things in this life, take death and futurity as objects on which to display it." JOHNSON. "That is mighty foolish affectation. Fear is one of the passions of human nature, of which it is impossible to divest it. You remember that the Emperour Charles V, when he read upon the tomb-stone of a Spanish nobleman, 'Here lies one who never knew fear,' wittily said, 'Then he never snuffed a candle with his fingers.'"

"Perfect good breeding," he observed, "consists in having no particular mark of any profession."

Dr. Johnson shunned to-night any discussion of the perplexed question of fate and free will, which I attempted to agitate: "Sir, (said he,) we *know* our will is free, and *there's* an end on't."

Garrick played round him with a fond vivacity, taking hold of the breasts of his coat, and, looking up in his face with a lively archness, complimented him on the good health which he seemed then to enjoy; while the sage, shaking his head, beheld him with a gentle complacency. One of the company not being come at the appointed hour, I proposed, as usual upon such occasions, to order dinner to be served; adding, "Ought six people to be kept waiting for one?" "Why, yes, (answered Johnson, with a delicate humanity,) if the one will

suffer more by your sitting down, than the six will do by waiting." Goldsmith, to divert the tedious minutes, strutted about, bragging of his dress, and I believe was seriously vain of it, for his mind was wonderfully prone to such impressions. "Come, come, (said Garrick,) talk no more of that. You are perhaps, the worst — eh, eh!" — Goldsmith was eagerly attempting to interrupt him, when Garrick went on, laughing ironically, "Nay, you will always *look* like a gentleman; but I am talking of being well or *ill dress'd*." "Well, let me tell you, (said Goldsmith,) when my taylor brought home my bloom-coloured coat, he said, 'Sir, I have a favour to beg of you. When any body asks you who made your clothes, be pleased to mention John Filby, at the Harrow, in Water-lane.'" JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, that was because he knew the strange colour would attract crowds to gaze at it, and thus they might hear of him, and see how well he could make a coat even of so absurd a colour." °

After dinner our conversation first turned upon Pope. Johnson repeated to us, in his forcible melodious manner, the concluding lines of the Dunciad. While he was talking loudly in praise of those lines, one of the company ventured to say, "Too fine for such a poem: — a poem on what?" JOHNSON. (with a disdainful look,) "Why, on *dunces*. It was worth while being a dunce then. Ah, Sir, hadst *thou* lived in those days! It is not worth while being a dunce now, when there are no wits." Some one mentioned the description of Dover Cliff. JOHNSON. "No, Sir; it should be all precipice, — all vacuum. The crows impede your fall. The diminished appearance of the boats, and other circumstances, are all very good description; but do not impress the mind at once with the horrible idea of immense height. The impression is divided; you pass on by computation, from one stage of the tremendous space to another. Had the girl in 'The Mourning Bride' said she could not cast her shoe to the top of one of the pillars in the temple, it would not have aided the idea, but weakened it."

GARRICK. "Sheridan has too much vanity to be a good

man." JOHNSON. "No, Sir, were mankind to be divided into good and bad, he would stand considerably within the ranks of good."

Mrs. Montague being mentioned; — REYNOLDS. "I think that essay does her honour." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, it does *her* honour, but it would do nobody else honour.° I have, indeed, not read it all. But when I take up the end of a web, and find it packthread, I do not expect, by looking further, to find embroidery. Sir, I will venture to say, there is not one sentence of true criticism in her book. None shewing the beauty of thought, as formed on the workings of the human heart."

One day at Sir Joshua's table, when it was related that Mrs. Montague, in an excess of compliment to the authour of a modern tragedy, had exclaimed, "I tremble for Shakspeare;" Johnson said, "When Shakspeare has got —— for his rival, and Mrs. Montague for his defender, he is in a poor state indeed."

JOHNSON. "We have an example of true criticism in Burke's 'Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful.' There is no great merit in telling how many plays have ghosts in them, and how this ghost is better than that. You must shew how terrour is impressed on the human heart. — In the description of night in Macbeth, the beetle and the bat detract from the general idea of darkness, — inspissated gloom."

Politicks being mentioned, he said, "This petitioning is a new mode of distressing government, and a mighty easy one. I will undertake to get petitions either against quarter guineas or half guineas, with the help of a little hot wine."

JOHNSON. "Many of Shakspeare's plays are the worse for being acted: Macbeth, for instance."

Talking of our feeling for the distresses of others; — JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, there is much noise made about it, but it is greatly exaggerated. Why, there's Baretti,° who is to be tried for his life to-morrow: friends have risen up for him on every side; yet if he should be hanged, none of them will eat a slice of plum-pudding the less. Sir, that sympathetick feeling goes a very little way in depressing the mind."

Boswell. "I have often blamed myself, Sir, for not feeling for others, as sensibly as many say they do." Johnson. "Sir, don't be duped by them any more. You will find these very feeling people are not very ready to do you good. They *pay* you by *feeling*."

He appeared, for the only time I suppose in his life, as a witness in a Court of Justice, being called to give evidence to the character of Mr. Baretti, who having stabbed a man in the street, was arraigned at the Old Bailey for murder. Never did such a constellation of genius enlighten the awful Sessions House, emphatically called Justice Hall; Mr. Burke, Mr. Garrick, Mr. Beauclerk, and Dr. Johnson. Johnson gave his evidence in a slow, deliberate, and distinct manner, which was uncommonly impressive. It is well known that Mr. Baretti was acquitted.

We went home to his house to tea. Mrs. Williams made it with sufficient dexterity, notwithstanding her blindness, though her manner of satisfying herself that the cups were full enough, appeared to me a little awkward; for I fancied she put her finger down a certain way, till she felt the tea touch it. In my first elation at being allowed the privilege of attending Dr. Johnson at his late visits to this lady, which was like being *è secretioribus consiliis*, I willingly drank cup after cup, as if it had been the Heliconian spring. But as the charm of novelty went off, I grew more fastidious; and besides, I discovered that she was of a peevish temper.°

Mr. Fergusson told him of a new invented machine which went without horses: a man who sat in it turned a handle, which worked a spring that drove it forward. "Then, Sir, (said Johnson,) what is gained is, the man has his choice whether he will move himself alone, or himself and the machine too."

I asked, "If, Sir, you were shut up in a castle, and a newborn child with you, what would you do?" "Why, Sir, I should not much like my company." Boswell. "But would you take the trouble of rearing it?" He seemed, as may well be supposed, unwilling to pursue the subject:

but upon my persevering in my question, replied, "Why yes, Sir, I would; but I must have all conveniences. If I had no garden, I would make a shed on the roof, and take it there for fresh air. I should feed it, and wash it much, and with warm water to please it, not with cold water to give it pain." BOSWELL. "But, Sir, does not heat relax?" JOHNSON. "Sir, you are not to imagine the water is to be very hot. I would not *coddle* the child. No, Sir, the hardy method of treating children does no good. I'll take you five children from London, who shall cuff five Highland children. Sir, a man bred in London will carry a burthen, or run, or wrestle, as well as a man brought up in the hardest manner in the country." BOSWELL. "Would you teach this child that I have furnished you with, any thing?" JOHNSON. "No, I should not be apt to teach it." BOSWELL. "Would not you have a pleasure in teaching it?" JOHNSON. "No, Sir, I should *not* have a pleasure in teaching it." BOSWELL. "Have you not a pleasure in teaching men! — *There* I have you. You have the same pleasure in teaching men, that I should have in teaching children." JOHNSON. "Why, something about that."

JOHNSON. "It is not from reason and prudence that people, marry, but from inclination. A man is poor; he thinks 'I cannot be worse, and so I'll e'en take Peggy.'"

BOSWELL. "Sir, is it not a very bad thing for landlords to oppress their tenants, by raising their rents?" JOHNSON. "Very bad. But, Sir, it never can have any general influence: it may distress some individuals. For, consider this: landlords cannot do without tenants. Now tenants will not give more for land, than land is worth. If they can make more of their money by keeping a shop, or any other way, they do it, and so oblige landlords to let land come back to a reasonable rent, in order that they may get tenants." BOSWELL. "So, Sir, you laugh at schemes of political improvement." JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, most schemes of political improvement are very laughable things. There is no doubt, that if the poor should reason, 'We'll be the poor no longer, we'll

make the rich take their turn,' they could easily do it, were it not that they can't agree."

He would not suffer one of the petitions to the King about the Middlesex election to be read.

BOSWELL. "Foote, Sir, told me, that when he was very ill he was not afraid to die." JOHNSON. "It is not true, Sir. Hold a pistol to Foote's breast, or to Hume's breast, and threaten to kill them, and you'll see how they behave." To my question, whether we might not fortify our minds for the approach of death, he answered, in a passion, "No, Sir, let it alone. It matters not how a man dies, but how he lives. The act of dying is not of importance, it lasts so short a time." He added, (with an earnest look,) "A man knows it must be so, and submits. It will do him no good to whine."

I attempted to continue the conversation. He was so provoked, that he said: "Give us no more of this;" and when I was going away, called to me sternly, "Don't let us meet to-morrow."

Next morning I sent him a note, stating that I might have been in the wrong, but it was not intentionally; notwithstanding our agreement not to meet that day, I would call on him in my way to the city, and stay five minutes. Upon entering his study, I was glad that he was not alone. I whispered him, "Well, Sir, you are now in good humour." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir." I was going to leave him, and had got as far as the staircase. He stopped me, and smiling, said, "Get you gone *in;*" a curious mode of inviting me to stay.

"Now (said he,) that you are going to marry, do not expect more from life, than life will afford. You may often find yourself out of humour, and you may often think your wife not studious enough to please you; and yet you may have reason to consider yourself as upon the whole very happily married."

Talking of marriage in general, he observed, "Our marriage service is too refined. It is calculated only for the best kind of marriages."

I was volatile enough to repeat to him a little epigrammatick song of mine, on matrimony.

A MATRIMONIAL THOUGHT.

"In the blithe days of honey-moon,
With Kate's allurements smitten,
I lov'd her late, I lov'd her soon,
And call'd her dearest kitten.

But now my kitten's grown a cat,
And cross like other wives,
O! by my soul, my honest Mat,
I fear she has nine lives."

My illustrious friend said, "It is very well, Sir; but you should not swear." Upon which I altered "O! by my soul," to "alas, alas!"

In 1770, he published a political pamphlet, entitled "The False Alarm," intended to justify the conduct of ministry and their majority in the House of Commons for having virtually assumed it as an axiom, that the expulsion of a Member of Parliament was equivalent to exclusion, and thus having declared Colonel Lutterel to be duly elected for the county of Middlesex, notwithstanding Mr. Wilkes had a great majority of votes. This being justly considered as a gross violation of the right of election, an alarm for the constitution extended itself all over the kingdom. To prove this alarm to be false, was the purpose of Johnson's pamphlet; but even his vast powers were inadequate to cope with constitutional truth and reason, and his argument failed of effect; and the House of Commons have since expunged the offensive resolutions from their Journals. That the House of Commons might have expelled Mr. Wilkes repeatedly, and as often as he should be re-chosen, was not denied; but incapacitation cannot be but an act of the whole legislature. It was wonderful to see how a prejudice in favour of government in general, and an aversion to popular clamour, could blind and contract such an understanding as Johnson's, in this particular case; yet the wit, the sarcasm, the eloquent vivacity which this

pamphlet displayed, made it be read with great avidity at the time.

"He who may live as he will, seldom lives long in the observation of his own rules."

As I was not in London, I had no opportunity of enjoying his company and recording his conversation. To supply this blank, I shall present my readers with some *Collectanea*, obligingly furnished to me by the Rev. Dr. Maxwell, of Falkland, in Ireland, some time assistant preacher at the Temple, and for many years the social friend of Johnson:

"The very *minutiæ* of such a character must be interesting, and may be compared to the filings of diamonds.

"The inseparable imperfection annexed to all human governments, consisted, Johnson said, in not being able to create a sufficient fund of virtue and principle to carry the laws into due and effectual execution. Wisdom might plan, but virtue alone could execute. And where could sufficient virtue be found? A variety of delegated, and often discretionary, powers must be entrusted somewhere: which, if not governed by integrity and conscience, would necessarily be abused, till at last the constable would sell his for a shilling.

"He seemed to me to be considered as a kind of publick oracle, whom every body thought they had a right to visit and consult. I never could discover how he found time for his compositions. He declaimed all the morning, then went to dinner at a tavern, where he commonly staid late, and then drank his tea at some friend's house, over which he loitered a great while, but seldom took supper. I fancy he must have read and wrote chiefly in the night, for I can scarcely recollect that he ever refused going with me to a tavern, and he often went to Ranelagh, which he deemed a place of innocent recreation.

"He frequently gave all the silver in his pocket to the poor, who watched him, between his house and the tavern where he dined. He walked the streets at all hours, and said he was never robbed, for the rogues knew he had little money, nor had the appearance of having much.

"Though the most accessible and communicative man alive, yet when he suspected he was invited to be exhibited, he constantly spurned the invitation.

"Two young women ° from Staffordshire visited him when I was present, to consult him on the subject of Methodism, to which they were inclined. 'Come, (said he,) you pretty fools, dine with Maxwell and me at the Mitre, and we will talk over that subject;' which they did, and after dinner he took one of them upon his knee, and fondled her for half an hour together.

"He observed, that a man in London was in less danger of falling in love indiscreetly, than any where else; for there the difficulty of deciding between the conflicting pretensions of a vast variety of objects, kept him safe.

"He loved, he said, the old black letter books; they were rich in matter, though their style was inelegant; wonderfully so, considering how conversant the writers were with the best models of antiquity.

"Burton's 'Anatomy of Melancholy,' he said, was the only book that ever took him out of bed two hours sooner than he wished to rise.

"He had great compassion for the miseries and distresses of the Irish nation, particularly the Papists; and severely reprobated the barbarous debilitating policy of the British government, which, he said, was the most detestable mode of persecution. Better would it be to restrain the turbulence of the natives by the authority of the sword, and to make them amenable to law and justice by an effectual and vigorous police, than to grind them to powder by all manner of disabilities and incapacities.

"Being solicited to compose a funeral sermon for the daughter of a tradesman, and being told that she was remarkable for her humility and condescension to inferiours, he observed, that those were very laudable qualities, but it might not be so easy to discover who the lady's inferiours were.

"When exasperated by contradiction, he was apt to treat his opponents with too much acrimony: as, 'Sir, you don't

see your way through that question:'—'Sir, you talk the language of ignorance.' On my observing to him that a certain gentleman had remained silent the whole evening, in the midst of a very brilliant and learned society, 'Sir, (said he,) the conversation overflowed, and drowned him.'

"'Jonas, (said he,) acquired some reputation by travelling abroad, but lost it all by travelling at home.'

"Whatever might be thought of some methodist teachers, he said he could scarcely doubt the sincerity of that man who travelled nine hundred miles in a month, and preached twelve times a week.

"In blank-verse, he said, the language suffered more distortion, to keep it out of prose, than any inconvenience or limitation to be apprehended from the shackles and circumspection of rhyme.

"He refused to go out of a room before me at Mr. Langton's house, saying, he hoped he knew his rank better than to presume to take place of a Doctor in Divinity.

"He said he never passed that week in his life which he would wish to repeat, were an angel to make the proposal to him.

"He was of opinion, that the English nation cultivated both their soil and their reason better than any other people.

"'Lord Lyttelton (said he,) sat down to write a book, to tell the world what the world had all his life been telling him.'

"Speaking of the *inward light*, to which some methodists pretended, he said, it was a principle utterly incompatible with social or civil security. 'If a man (said he,) pretends to a principle of action of which I can know nothing, nay, not so much as that he has it, but only that he pretends to it; how can I tell what that person may be prompted to do? When a person professes to be governed by a written ascertained law, I can then know where to find him.'

"Being asked by a young nobleman, what was become of the gallantry and military spirit of the old English nobility, he replied, 'Why, my Lord, I'll tell you what is become of it: it is gone into the city to look for a fortune.'

"Of a dull tiresome fellow, he said, 'That fellow seems to me to possess but one idea, and that is a wrong one.'

"A gentleman who had been very unhappy in marriage, married immediately after his wife died: Johnson said it was the triumph of hope over experience.

"He observed that a man of sense and education should meet a suitable companion in a wife. It was a miserable thing when the conversation could only be such as whether the mutton should be boiled or roasted, and probably a dispute about that.

"He said, foppery was never cured; once a coxcomb, always a coxcomb.

"Gilbert Cowper called him the Caliban of literature; 'Well, (said he,) I must dub him the Punchinello.'

"To find a substitution for violated morality, he said, was the leading feature in all perversions of religion.

"'It was a most mortifying reflection for any man to consider, *what he had done*, compared with what *he might have done*.'

"'The condition of the poor was the true mark of national discrimination.'

"Of economy, he remarked, it was hardly worth while to save anxiously twenty pounds a year. If a man could save, so as to enable him to assume a different rank in society, then, indeed, it might answer some purpose.

"A principal source of erroneous judgement was, viewing things partially and only on *one side: fortune hunters*, when they contemplated the fortunes *singly* and *separately*, a dazzling and tempting object; but when they came to possess the wives and their fortunes *together*, they began to suspect they had not made quite so good a bargain."

He published a political pamphlet "respecting Falkland's Islands," in which, upon materials furnished to him by ministry, he successfully endeavoured to persuade the nation that it was wise and laudable to suffer the question of right to remain undecided, rather than involve our country in another war. Upon this occasion, we find Johnson lashing

the party in opposition with unbounded severity, and making the fullest use of what he ever reckoned a most effectual argumentative instrument, — contempt. His character of their very able mysterious champion, JUNIUS,° is executed with all the force of his genius, and finished with the highest care.

Mr. Strahan, the printer, who was at once his friendly agent in receiving his pension for him, and his banker in supplying him with money when he wanted it; who was himself now a Member of Parliament, thought he should do eminent service, both to government and Johnson, if he could be the means of his getting a seat in the House of Commons. It is not to be believed that Mr. Strahan would have applied, unless Johnson had approved of it. I never heard him mention the subject; but at a later period of his life, when Sir Joshua Reynolds told him that Mr. Edmund Burke had said, that if he had come early into Parliament, he certainly would have been the greatest speaker that ever was there, Johnson exclaimed, "I should like to try my hand now." °

TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS, IN LEICESTER-FIELDS.

"WHEN I came to Lichfield, I found that my portrait ° had been much visited, and much admired. Every man has a lurking wish to appear considerable in his native place; and I was pleased with the dignity conferred by such a testimony of your regard. SAM. JOHNSON."

In his religious record he charges himself with not rising early enough. "Alas! how hard would it be, if this indulgence were to be imputed to a sick man as a crime." In his retrospect on the following Easter-eve, he says, "When I review the last year, I am able to recollect so little done, that shame and sorrow, though perhaps too weakly, come upon me. I do not remember that since I left Oxford, I ever rose early by mere choice, but once or twice at Edial, and two or three times for the Rambler."

To Joseph Banks, Esq.

"Perpetua ambitâ bis terrâ præmia lactis
Hæc habet altrici Capra secunda Jovis."

"Sir,

"I return thanks to you and to Dr. Solander for the pleasure which I received in yesterday's conversation. I could not recollect a motto for your Goat,° but have given her one. You, Sir, may perhaps have an epick poem from some happier pen. Sam. Johnson."

Johnson. "Why, Sir, till you can fix the degree of obstinacy and negligence of the scholars, you cannot fix the degree of severity of the master. Severity must be continued until obstinacy be subdued, and negligence be cured."

Boswell. "Lord Monboddo still maintains the superiority of the savage life. Sir, that is a common prejudice." Johnson. "Yes, Sir, but a common prejudice should not be found in one whose trade is to rectify errour."

In the morning we had talked of old families, and the respect due to them. Johnson. "Yes, Sir, and it is a matter of opinion very necessary to keep society together. What is it but opinion, by which we have a respect for authority, that prevents us, who are the rabble, from rising up and pulling down you who are gentlemen from your places, and saying, 'We will be gentlemen in our turn?'"

I gave him an account of the excellent mimickry of a friend of mine in Scotland. Johnson. "Why, Sir, it is making a very mean use of man's powers. But to be a good mimick, requires great powers; great acuteness of observation, great retention of what is observed, and great pliancy of organs to represent what is observed."

"Why, Sir, (said he,) you would not imagine that the French *jour*, day, is derived from the Latin *dies*, and yet nothing is more certain: and the intermediate steps are very clear. From *dies*, comes *diurnus*. *Diu* is, by inaccurate ears, or inaccurate pronunciation, easily confounded with *giu*: then the Italians form a substantive of the ablative of an adjective, and thence

giurno, or, as they make it *giorno:* which is readily contracted into *giour*, or *jour.*"

He and I dined at General Paoli's. A question was started whether the state of marriage was natural to man. JOHNSON. "Sir, it is so far from being natural for a man and woman to live in a state of marriage, that we find all the motives which they have for remaining in that connection, and the restraints which civilized society imposes to prevent separation, are hardly sufficient to keep them together." The General said, that in a state of nature the same causes of dissention would not arise, as occur between husband and wife in a civilized state. JOHNSON. "Sir, they would have dissentions enough though of another kind. One would choose to go a hunting in this wood, the other in that; one would choose to go a fishing in this lake, the other in that; or, perhaps, one would choose to go a hunting, when the other would choose to go a fishing."

We then fell into a disquisition whether there is any beauty independent of utility. Dr. Johnson maintained that there was; and he instanced a coffee cup which he held in his hand, the painting of which was of no real use, as the cup could hold coffee equally well if plain; yet the painting was beautiful.

JOHNSON. "Nobody can write the life of a man, but those who have eat and drunk and lived in social intercourse with him.

"Promiscuous hospitality is not the way to gain real influence. You must help some people at table before others; you must ask some people how they like their wine oftener than others. You therefore offend more people than you please. You are like the French statesman, who said, when he granted a favour, '*J'ai fait dix mécontents et un ingrat.*' Besides, Sir, being entertained ever so well at a man's table, impresses no lasting regard or esteem. No, Sir, the way to make sure of power and influence is by lending money confidentially to your neighbours at a small interest, or perhaps at no interest at all, and having their bonds in your possession." BOSWELL. "May not a man, Sir, employ his riches to advantage, in educating young men of merit?" JOHNSON.

"Yes, Sir, if they fall in your way; but if it be understood that you patronize young men of merit, you will be harassed with solicitations. You will have numbers forced upon you who have no merit; some will force them upon you from mistaken partiality; and some from downright interested motives, without scruple; and you will be disgraced."

We walked to the Pantheon. The first view of it did not strike us so much as Ranelagh, of which he said, the "*coup d'œil* was the finest thing he had ever seen." I said there was not half a guinea's worth of pleasure in seeing this place. JOHNSON. "But, Sir, there is half a guinea's worth of inferiority to other people in not having seen it." BOSWELL. "I doubt, Sir, whether there are many happy people here." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, there are many happy people here. There are many people here who are watching hundreds, and who think hundreds are watching them. Sir, I am talking of the mass of the people. We see even what the boasted Athenians were. The little effect which Demosthenes's orations had upon them, shews that they were barbarians."

Of a schoolmaster he said, "He has a great deal of good about him; but he is also very defective in some respects. His inner part is good, but his outer part is mighty awkward. I would not put a boy to him whom I intended for a man of learning. But for the sons of citizens, who are to learn a little, get good morals, and then go to trade, he may do very well."

Fielding being mentioned, Johnson exclaimed, "He was a blockhead!" BOSWELL. "Will you not allow, Sir, that he draws very natural pictures of human life?" JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, it is of very low life. Richardson used to say, that had he not known who Fielding was, he should have believed he was an ostler. Sir, there is more knowledge of the heart in one letter of Richardson's, than in all 'Tom Jones.' I, indeed, never read 'Joseph Andrews.'" ERSKINE. "Surely, Sir, Richardson is very tedious." JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, if you were to read Richardson for the story, your impatience

would be so much fretted that you would hang yourself. But you must read him for the sentiment, and consider the story as only giving occasion to the sentiment."

JOHNSON. "I maintain, that an individual of any society who practises what is allowed is not a dishonest man." BOSWELL. "So then, Sir, you do not think ill of a man who wins perhaps forty thousand pounds in a winter?" JOHNSON. "Sir, I do not call a gamester a dishonest man; but I call him an unsocial man, an unprofitable man. Gaming is a mode of transferring property without producing any intermediate good."

General Oglethorpe told us that when he was a very young man, I think only fifteen, serving under Prince Eugene of Savoy, he was sitting in a company at table with a Prince of Wirtemberg. The Prince took up a glass of wine, and, by a fillip, made some of it fly in Oglethorpe's face. Here was a nice dilemma. To have challenged him instantly, might have fixed a quarrelsome character upon the young soldier: to have taken no notice of it, might have been considered as cowardice. Oglethorpe, therefore, keeping his eye upon the Prince, and smiling all the time, as if he took what his Highness had done in jest, said "*Mon Prince,* —" (I forget the French words he used, the purport however was,) "That's a good joke: but we do it much better in England;" and threw a whole glass of wine in the Prince's face. An old General who sat by, said, "*Il a bien fait, mon Prince, vous l'avez commencé:*" and thus all ended in good humour.

A question was started, how far people who disagree in a capital point can live in friendship together. Johnson said they might. Goldsmith said they could not, as they had not the *idem velle atque idem nolle* — the same likings and the same aversions. JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, you must shun the subject as to which you disagree. For instance, I can live very well with Burke: I love his knowledge, his genius, his diffusion, and affluence of conversation; but I would not talk to him of the Rockingham party." GOLDSMITH. "But, Sir, when people live together who have something as to which

they disagree, and which they want to shun, they will be in the situation mentioned in the story of Bluebeard: 'You may look into all the chambers but one.' But we should have the greatest inclination to look into that chamber, to talk of that subject." JOHNSON, (with a loud voice) "Sir, I am not saying that *you* could live in friendship with a man from whom you differ as to some point: I am only saying that I could do it. You put me in mind of Sappho in Ovid." °

Goldsmith was now busy in writing a Natural History; and, that he might have full leisure for it, he had taken lodgings, at a farmer's house, near to the six milestone, on the Edgeware-road, and had carried down his books in two returned postchaises. Mr. Mickle and I went in, and found curious scraps of descriptions of animals, scrawled upon the wall with a black lead pencil.

Lord Mansfield, "Severity is not the way to govern either boys or men." "Nay (said Johnson,) it is the way to *govern* them. I know not whether it be the way to *mend* them."

Mr. Langton was about to establish a school upon his estate, but it had been suggested to him, that it might have a tendency to make the people less industrious. JOHNSON. "No, Sir. While learning to read and write is a distinction, the few who have that distinction may be the less inclined to work; but when every body learns to read and write, it is no longer a distinction. A man who has a laced waistcoat is too fine a man to work; but if every body had laced waistcoats, we should have people working in laced waistcoats. There are no people whatever more industrious, none who work more, than our manufacturers; yet they have all learned to read and write. Sir, you must not neglect doing a thing immediately good, from fear of remote evil; — from fear of its being abused."

I mentioned the soft and sweet sound of a fine woman's voice. JOHNSON. "No, Sir, if a serpent or a toad uttered it, you would think it ugly." BOSWELL. "So you would think, Sir, were a beautiful tune to be uttered by one of those animals." JOHNSON. "No, Sir, it would be admired. We

have seen fine fiddlers whom we liked as little as toads" (laughing).

Talking on the subject of taste in the arts, he said, that difference of taste was, in truth, difference of skill. BOSWELL. "But, Sir, is there not a quality called taste, which consists merely in perception or in liking; for instance, we find people differ much as to what is the best style of English composition. Some think Swift's the best; others prefer a fuller and grander way of writing." JOHNSON. "Sir, you must first define what you mean by style, before you can judge who has a good taste in style, and who has a bad. The two classes of persons whom you have mentioned, don't differ as to good and bad."

I regretted the reflection in his preface to Shakspeare against Garrick: "I collated such copies as I could procure, and wished for more, but have not found the collectors of these rarities very communicative." I told him, that Garrick had vindicated himself by assuring me, that Johnson was made welcome to the full use of his collection, and that he left the key of it with a servant, with orders to have a fire and every convenience for him. Johnson's notion was, that Garrick wanted to be courted for them, and that, on the contrary, Garrick should have courted him, and sent him the plays of his own accord. But, indeed, considering the slovenly and careless manner in which books were treated by Johnson, it could not be expected that scarce and valuable editions ° should have been lent to him.

A gentleman having to some of the usual arguments for drinking added this: "You know, Sir, drinking drives away care, and makes us forget whatever is disagreeable. Would not you allow a man to drink for that reason?" JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, if he sat next *you*."

A learned gentleman, who in the course of conversation wished to inform us of this simple fact, that the Counsel upon the circuit at Shrewsbury were much bitten by fleas, took, I suppose, seven or eight minutes in relating it circumstantially. Johnson sat in great impatience till the gentleman had finished his tedious narrative, and then burst out (playfully however,)

"It is a pity, Sir, that you have not seen a lion; for a flea has taken you such a time, that a lion must have served you a twelvemonth."

"Much (said he,) may be made of a Scotchman, if he be *caught* young."

A friend of mine had resided long in Spain, and was unwilling to return to Britain. JOHNSON. "Sir, he is attached to some woman." BOSWELL. "I rather believe, Sir, it is the fine climate which keeps him there." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, how can you talk so? What is *climate* to happiness? You may advise me to live at Bologna to eat sausages. The sausages there are the best in the world; they lose much by being carried."

"Walpole was a minister given by the King to the people: Pitt was a minister given by the people to the King, — as an adjunct."

"The advantage which humanity derives from law is this: that the law gives every man a rule of action, and prescribes a mode of conduct which shall entitle him to the support and protection of society. That the law may be a rule of action, it is necessary that it be known; it is necessary that it be permanent and stable. The law is the measure of civil right: but if the measure be changeable, the extent of the thing measured never can be settled. To permit a law to be modified at discretion, is to leave the community without law. To this case may be justly applied that important principle, *misera est servitus ubi jus est aut incognitum aut vagum.* To punish fraud when it is detected is the proper art of vindictive justice; but to prevent frauds, and make punishment unnecessary, is the great employment of legislative wisdom. *Lex non recipit majus et minus,* — we may have a law, or we may have no law, but we cannot have half a law. We must either have a rule of action, or be permitted to act by discretion and by chance. Deviations from the law must be uniformly punished, or no man can be certain when he shall be safe."

To James Boswell.

"I have heard of your masquerade.° What says your synod to such innovations? I am not studiously scrupulous, nor do I think a masquerade either evil in itself, or very likely to be the occasion of evil; yet as the world thinks it a very licentious relaxation of manners, I would not have been one of the *first* masquers in a country where no masquerade had ever been before.

"A new edition of my great Dictionary is printed, from a copy which I was persuaded to revise; I have looked very little into it since I wrote it, and, I think, I found it full as often better, as worse, than I expected.

"Baretti and Davies have had a furious quarrel; a quarrel, I think, irreconcilable. Dr. Goldsmith has a new comedy,° which is expected in the spring. No name is yet given it. The chief diversion arises from a stratagem by which a lover is made to mistake his future father-in-law's house for an inn. This, you see, borders upon farce. The dialogue is quick and gay, and the incidents are so prepared as not to seem improbable. Sam. Johnson."

Dr. Goldsmith's apology to the publick for beating Evans, a bookseller, was written so much in Dr. Johnson's manner, that both Mrs. Williams and I supposed it to be his; but he soon undeceived us. Johnson. "Sir, had he shown it to any one friend, he would not have been allowed to publish it. He has, indeed, done it very well; but it is a foolish thing well done. I suppose he has been so much elated with the success of his new comedy, that he has thought every thing that concerned him must be of importance to the publick." Boswell. "I fancy, Sir, this is the first time that he has been engaged in such an adventure." Johnson. "Why, Sir, I believe it is the first time he has *beat;* he may have *been beaten* before. This, Sir, is a new plume to him."

Lord Chesterfield being mentioned, Johnson remarked, that almost all of that celebrated nobleman's witty sayings were puns. He, however, allowed the merit of good wit to his

Lordship's saying, when very old and infirm: "Tyrawley and I have been dead these two years; but we don't choose to have it known."

He observed, that all works which describe manners require notes in sixty or seventy years, or less; and told us, he had communicated all he knew that could throw light upon "The Spectator." He said, "Addison had made his Sir Andrew Freeport a true Whig, arguing against giving charity to beggars, and throwing out other such ungracious sentiments; but that he had thought better, and made amends by making him found an hospital for decayed farmers." He called for the volume of "The Spectator," in which that account is contained, and read it aloud to us. He read so well, that every thing acquired additional weight and grace from his utterance.

Modern imitations of ancient ballads he treated with ridicule.

He disapproved of introducing scripture phrases into secular discourse.

When I looked at my watch, and told him it was twelve o'clock, he cried, "What's that to you and me?" and ordered Frank to tell Mrs. Williams that we were coming to drink tea with her, which we did. It was settled that we should go to church together next day.

On the 9th of April, being Good Friday, I breakfasted with him on tea and cross-buns; *Doctor* Levet, as Frank called him, making the tea. He carried me with him to the church of St. Clement Danes, where he had his seat; and his behaviour was, as I had imaged to myself, solemnly devout. I never shall forget the tremulous earnestness with which he pronounced the aweful petition in the Litany: "In the hour of death, and at the day of judgment, good Lord deliver us."

We went to church both in the morning and evening. In the interval between the two services we did not dine; but he read in the Greek New Testament, and I turned over several of his books.

In Archbishop Laud's Diary, I found the following passage, which I read to Dr. Johnson:

"1623. February 1, Sunday. I stood by the most illustrious Prince Charles, at dinner. 'I cannot (saith he,) defend a bad, nor yield in a good cause.'" JOHNSON. "Sir, this is false reasoning: because every cause has a bad side: and a lawyer is not overcome, though the cause which he has endeavoured to support be determined against him."

To my great surprize Johnson asked me to dine with him on Easterday. He told me, "I have generally a meat pye on Sunday: it is baked at a publick oven, which is very properly allowed, because one man can attend it; and thus the advantage is obtained of not keeping servants from church to dress dinners."

I had gratified my curiosity much in dining with JEAN JAQUES ROUSSEAU, while he lived in the wilds of Neufchatel: I had as great a curiosity to dine with DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON, in the dusky recess of a court in Fleet-street. I supposed we should scarcely have knives and forks, and only some strange, uncouth, ill-drest fish: but I found every thing in very good order.° A dinner here was considered as a singular phenomenon, and I was frequently interrogated on the subject. Foote, I remember, in allusion to Francis, the *negro*, was willing to suppose that our repast was *black broth*. But the fact was, that we had a very good soup, a boiled leg of lamb and spinach, a veal pye, and a rice pudding.

Goldsmith, though his vanity often excited him to occasional competition, had a very high regard for Johnson, which he had at this time expressed in the strongest manner in the Dedication of his Comedy, entitled, "She Stoops to Conquer."

I put a question upon a fact in common life, which he could not answer. What is the reason that women servants have much lower wages than men servants, when in fact our female house servants work much harder than the male?

He told me that he had twelve or fourteen times attempted to keep a journal of his life but never could persevere. He advised me to do it. "The great thing to be recorded, (said

he,) is the state of your own mind; and you should write down every thing that you remember, for you cannot judge at first what is good or bad; and write immediately while the impression is fresh, for it will not be the same a week afterwards."

I again solicited him to communicate to me the particulars of his early life. He said, "You shall have them all for twopence. I hope you shall know a great deal more of me before you write my Life."

At General Oglethorpe's, Goldsmith expatiated on the common topick, that the race of our people was degenerated, and that this was owing to luxury. JOHNSON. "Sir, in the first place, I doubt the fact. I believe there are as many tall men in England now, as ever there were. But, secondly, supposing the stature of our people to be diminished, that is not owing to luxury; for, Sir, consider to how very small a proportion of our people luxury can reach. I admit that the great increase of commerce and manufactures hurts the military spirit of a people; because it produces a competition for something else than martial honours, — a competition for riches. It also hurts the bodies of the people. A tailor sits cross-legged; but that is not luxury." GOLDSMITH. "Come, you're going to the same place by another road." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, I say that is not *luxury*. Let us take a walk from Charing-cross to Whitechapel, through, I suppose, the greatest series of shops in the world, what is there in any of these shops, (if you except gin-shops,) that can do any human being any harm?" GOLDSMITH. "Well, Sir, I'll accept your challenge. The very next shop to Northumberland-house is a pickle-shop." JOHNSON. "Well, Sir: do we not know that a maid can in one afternoon make pickles sufficient to serve a whole family for a year? nay, that five pickle-shops can serve all the kingdom? Besides, Sir, there is no harm done to any body by the making of pickles, or the eating of pickles."

We drank tea with the ladies; and Goldsmith sung Tony Lumpkin's song in his comedy, "She Stoops to Conquer," and a very pretty one, to an Irish tune, which he had designed for Miss Hardcastle.

I told him that Mrs. Macaulay said she wondered how he could reconcile his political principles with his moral. JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, I reconcile my principles very well. Mankind are happier in a state of inequality and subordination. Were they to be in this pretty state of equality, they would soon degenerate into brutes: — they would become Monboddo's nation: — their tails would grow. Sir, all would be losers, were all to work for all: — All intellectual improvement arises from leisure; all leisure arises from one working for another."

I spoke of Allan Ramsay's "Gentle Shepherd," in the Scottish dialect, as the best pastoral that had ever been written; I offered to teach Dr. Johnson to understand it. "No, Sir, (said he,) I won't learn it. You shall retain your superiority by my not knowing it."

This brought on a question whether one man is lessened by another's acquiring an equal degree of knowledge with him. Johnson asserted the affirmative.

JOHNSON. "It is laudable in a man to wish to live by his labours; but he should write so as he may *live* by them, not so as he may be knocked on the head." GOLDSMITH. "Surely, then, one may tell truth with safety." JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, in the first place, he who tells a hundred lies has disarmed the force of his lies. But besides; a man had rather have a hundred lies told of him, than one truth which he does not wish should be told." GOLDSMITH. "For my part, I'd tell truth, and shame the devil." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir; but the devil will be angry. I wish to shame the devil as much as you do, but I should choose to be out of the reach of his claws." GOLDSMITH. "His claws can do you no harm, when you have the shield of truth."

"One day Charles Townshend and a few more agreed to go and dine in the country, and each of them was to bring a friend in his carriage with him. Charles Townshend asked Fitzherbert to go with him, but told him, 'You must find somebody to bring you back: I can only carry you there.' Fitzherbert did not much like this arrangement. He however

consented, observing sarcastically, 'It will do very well; for then the same jokes will serve you in returning as in going.'"

We talked of the King's coming to see Goldsmith's new play. — "I wish he would," said Goldsmith; adding, however, with an affected indifference, "Not that it would do me the least good." JOHNSON. "Well then, Sir, let us say it would do *him* good (laughing). No, Sir, this affectation will not pass; — it is mighty idle. In such a state as ours, who would not wish to please the Chief Magistrate?" GOLDSMITH. "I *do* wish to please him. I remember a line in Dryden,

'And every poet is the monarch's friend.'

It ought to be reversed."

JOHNSON. "There is nothing, I think, in which the power of art is shown so much as in playing on the fiddle. In all other things we can do something at first. Any man will forge a bar of iron, if you give him a hammer; not so well as a smith, but tolerably. A man will saw a piece of wood, and make a box, though a clumsy one; but give him a fiddle and a fiddle-stick, and he can do nothing."

Mr. Elphinston talked of a new book, and asked Dr. Johnson if he had read it. JOHNSON. "I have looked into it." "What (said Elphinston,) have you not read it through?" Johnson, offended at being thus pressed, and so obliged to own his cursory mode of reading, answered tartly, "No, Sir; do *you* read books *through?*"

BOSWELL. "Do you think, Sir, that all who commit suicide are mad?" JOHNSON. "Sir, they are often not universally disordered in their intellects, but one passion presses so upon them, that they yield to it, and commit suicide, as a passionate man will stab another. After a man has taken the resolution to kill himself, it is not courage in him to do any thing, however desperate, because he has nothing to fear." GOLDSMITH. "I don't see that." JOHNSON. "Nay, but my dear Sir, why should not you see what every one else sees? It is upon the state of his mind, after the resolution is taken, that

I argue. He may then go and take the King of Prussia by the nose, at the head of his army. He cannot fear the rack who is resolved to kill himself. When Eustace Budgell was walking down to the Thames, determined to drown himself, he might, if he pleased, without any apprehension of danger, have turned aside, and first set fire to St. James's palace."

Mr. Beauclerk and I called on him in the morning. As we walked up Johnson's-court, I said, "I have a veneration for this court:" and was glad to find that Beauclerk had the same reverential enthusiasm.

JOHNSON. "People seldom read a book which is given to them; and few are given. The way to spread a work is to sell it at a low price. No man will send to buy a thing that costs even sixpence, without an intention to read it."

"Sir, a game of jokes is composed partly of skill, partly of chance, a man may be beat at times by one who has not the tenth part of his wit. Now Goldsmith's putting himself against another, is like a man laying a hundred to one who cannot spare the hundred. When he contends, if he gets the better, it is a very little addition to a man of his literary reputation: if he does not get the better, he is miserably vexed."

Johnson's own superlative powers of wit set him above any risk of such uneasiness. Garrick had remarked to me of him, a few days before, "Rabelais and all other wits are nothing compared with him. You may be diverted by them; but Johnson gives you a forcible hug, and shakes laughter out of you, whether you will or no."

Goldsmith, however, was often very fortunate in his witty contests, even when he entered the lists with Johnson himself. Sir Joshua Reynolds was in company with them one day, when Goldsmith said that he thought he could write a good fable, mentioned the simplicity which that kind of composition requires, and observed, that in most fables the animals introduced seldom talk in character. "For instance, the fable of the little fishes, who saw birds fly over their heads, and envying them, petitioned Jupiter to be changed into birds. The skill consists in making them talk like little fishes." While he

indulged himself in this fanciful reverie, he observed Johnson shaking his sides, and laughing. Upon which he smartly proceeded, "Why, Dr. Johnson, this is not so easy as you seem to think; for if you were to make little fishes talk, they would talk like WHALES."

"She Stoops to Conquer," being mentioned; JOHNSON. "I know of no comedy for many years that has answered so much the great end of comedy — making an audience merry."

Goldsmith said, that Garrick's compliment to the Queen, in "The Chances," was mean and gross flattery. JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, I would not *write*, I would not give solemnly under my hand, a character beyond what I thought really true; but a speech on the stage, let it flatter ever so extravagantly, is formular. It has always been formular to flatter Kings and Queens; so much so, that even in our church-service we have 'our most religious King,' used indiscriminately, whoever is King. Nay, they even flatter themselves; — 'we have been graciously pleased to grant.' — No modern flattery, however, is so gross as that of the Augustan age, where the Emperour was deified. '*Præsens Divus habebitur Augustus.*' And as to meanness, (rising into warmth) how is it mean in a player, — a showman, — a fellow who exhibits himself for a shilling, to flatter his Queen? Sir, it is right, at a time when the Royal Family is not generally liked, to let it be seen that the people like at least one of them." BOSWELL. "You say, Dr. Johnson, that Garrick exhibits himself for a shilling. In this respect he is only on a footing with a lawyer who exhibits himself for his fee, who will maintain any nonsense or absurdity, if the case require it. Garrick refuses a play or a part which he does not like: a lawyer never refuses." JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, what does this prove? only that a lawyer is worse. Boswell is now like Jack in 'The Tale of a Tub,' who, when he is puzzled by an argument,° hangs himself. He thinks I shall cut him down, but I'll let him hang" (laughing vociferously). I dined with him at Mr. Beauclerk's, where were Lord Charlemont, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and some more members of the LITERARY CLUB, whom he had obligingly invited to

meet me, as I was this evening to be balloted for as candidate for admission into that distinguished society. Johnson had done me the honour to propose me, and Beauclerk was very zealous for me.

JOHNSON. "It is amazing how little Goldsmith knows. He seldom comes where he is not more ignorant than any one else." SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS. "Yet there is no man whose company is more liked." JOHNSON. "To be sure, Sir. When people find a man of the most distinguished abilities as a writer, their inferiour while he is with them, it must be highly gratifying to them. What Goldsmith comically says of himself is very true, — he always gets the better when he argues alone; meaning, that he is master of a subject in his study, and can write well upon it; but when he comes into company, grows confused, and unable to talk. Sir, he has the art of compiling, and of saying every thing he has to say in a pleasing manner. He is now writing a Natural History, and will make it as entertaining as a Persian Tale."

JOHNSON. "I remember once being with Goldsmith in Westminster-abbey. While we surveyed the Poet's Corner, I said to him,

'*Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur istis.*'°

When we got to Temple-bar, he stopped me, pointed to the heads upon it, and slily whispered me,

'*Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur* ISTIS.'"

A proposition, that monuments to eminent persons should be erected in St. Paul's church as well as in Westminster-abbey, was mentioned. JOHNSON. "As Pope was a Roman Catholick, I would not have his to be first. I think Milton's rather should have the precedence.° I think more highly of him now than I did at twenty."

The gentlemen went away to their club, and I was left at Beauclerk's till the fate of my election should be announced to me. I sat in a state of anxiety which even the charming conversation of Lady Di Beauclerk could not entirely dissipate.

In a short time I received the agreeable intelligence that I was chosen. I hastened to the place of meeting, and was introduced to such a society as can seldom be found. Mr. Edmund Burke, whom I then saw for the first time, and whose splendid talents had long made me ardently wish for his acquaintance; Dr. Nugent, Mr. Garrick, Dr. Goldsmith, Mr. (afterwards Sir William) Jones, and the company with whom I had dined. Upon my entrance, Johnson placed himself behind a chair, on which he leaned as on a desk or pulpit, and with humorous formality gave me a *Charge*, pointing out the conduct expected from me as a good member of this club.

Much pleasant conversation passed which Johnson relished. But his conversation alone, or what led to it, or was interwoven with it, is the business of this work.

"I will do you, Boswell, the justice to say, that you are the most *unscottified* of your countrymen. You are almost the only instance of a Scotchman that I have known, who did not at every other sentence bring in some other Scotchman."

"In questions of simple unperplexed morality, conscience is very often a guide that may be trusted. But before conscience can determine, the state of the question is supposed to be completely known. In questions of law, or of fact, conscience is very often confounded with opinion. No man's conscience can tell him the right of another man; they must be known by rational investigation or historical enquiry. But it is a conscience very ill informed that violates the rights of one man for the convenience of another."

"As the great end of government is to give every man his own, no inconvenience is greater than that of making right uncertain. Nor is any man more an enemy to publick peace, than he who fills weak heads with imaginary claims."

"Were you to tell men who live without houses, how we pile brick upon brick, and rafter upon rafter, and that after a house is raised to a certain height, a man tumbles off a scaffold, and breaks his neck, he would laugh heartily at our folly; but it does not follow that men are better

without houses. No, Sir, (holding up a slice of a good loaf,) this is better than the bread tree."

Mayo. "I am of opinion, Sir, that every man is entitled to liberty of conscience in religion; and that the magistrate cannot restrain that right." Johnson. "Sir, I agree with you. Every man has a right to liberty of conscience, and with that the magistrate cannot interfere. People confound liberty of thinking with liberty of talking; nay, with liberty of preaching. Every man has a physical right to think as he pleases; for it cannot be discovered how he thinks. He has not a moral right, for he ought to inform himself, and think justly. But, Sir, no member of a society has a right to *teach* any doctrine contrary to what the society holds to be true." Mayo. "Then, Sir, we are to remain always in errour, and truth never can prevail." Johnson. "Sir, the only method by which religious truth can be established is by martyrdom. The magistrate has a right to enforce what he thinks; and he who is conscious of the truth has a right to suffer. I am afraid there is no other way of ascertaining the truth, but by persecution on the one hand and enduring it on the other." Mayo. "But, Sir, is it not very hard that I should not be allowed to teach my children what I really believe to be the truth?" Johnson. "Why, Sir, you might contrive to teach your children *extrà scandalum;* but, Sir, the magistrate, if he knows it, has a right to restrain you. Suppose you teach your children to be thieves?" Mayo. "This is making a joke of the subject." Johnson. "Nay, Sir, take it thus: — that you teach them the community of goods: for which there are as many plausible arguments as for most erroneous doctrines. You teach them that all things at first were in common, and that no man had a right to anything but as he laid his hands upon it; and that this still is, or ought to be, the rule amongst mankind. Here, Sir, you sap a great principle in society, — property. Or, suppose you should teach your children the notion of the Adamites, and they should run naked into the streets, would not the magistrate have a right to flog 'em into their doublets? I think he may; as it is

probable that he who is chopping off his own fingers may soon proceed to chop off those of other people. If I think it right to steal Mr. Dilly's plate, I am a bad man; but he can say nothing to me. If I make an open declaration that I think so, he will keep me out of his house. If I put forth my hand, I shall be sent to Newgate. This is the gradation of thinking, preaching, and acting; if a man thinks erroneously, he may keep his thoughts to himself, and nobody will trouble him; if he preaches erroneous doctrine, society may expel him; if he acts in consequence of it, the law takes place, and he is hanged." MAYO. "But, Sir, ought not Christians to have liberty of conscience?" JOHNSON. "I have already told you so, Sir. You are coming back to where you were. Dr. Mayo, like other champions for unlimited toleration, has got a set of words."

During this argument, Goldsmith sat in restless agitation, from a wish to get in and *shine*. Finding himself excluded, he had taken his hat to go away, but remained for some time with it in his hand, like a gamester, who, at the close of a long night, lingers for a little while, to see if he can have a favourable opening to finish with success. Once when he was beginning to speak, he found himself overpowered by the loud voice of Johnson, who was at the opposite end of the table, and did not perceive Goldsmith's attempt. Thus disappointed, Goldsmith in a passion threw down his hat, looking angrily at Johnson, and exclaimed in a bitter tone, "*Take it.*" When Toplady was going to speak, Johnson uttered some sound, which led Goldsmith to think that he was beginning again, and taking the words from Toplady. "Sir, the gentleman has heard you patiently for an hour: pray allow us now to hear him." JOHNSON. (sternly,) "Sir, I was not interrupting the gentleman. I was only giving him a signal of my attention. Sir, you are impertinent." Goldsmith made no reply, but continued in the company for some time.

Johnson and Mr. Langton and I went together to THE CLUB, where we found Mr. Burke, Mr. Garrick, and some other members, and amongst them our friend Goldsmith, who sat

silently brooding over Johnson's reprimand to him after dinner. Johnson perceived this, and said aside to some of us, "I'll make Goldsmith forgive me;" and then called to him in a loud voice, "Dr. Goldsmith, — something passed to-day where you and I dined; I ask your pardon." Goldsmith answered placidly, "It must be much from you, Sir, that I take ill." And so at once the difference was over, and they were on as easy terms as ever, and Goldsmith rattled away as usual.

I observed that Goldsmith had a great deal of Gold in his cabinet, but, not content with that, was always taking out his purse. JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, and that so often an empty purse!"

Goldsmith was still more mortified when, talking in a company with fluent vivacity, and, as he flattered himself, to the admiration of all who were present, a German who sat next him, and perceived Johnson rolling himself, as if about to speak, suddenly stopped him, saying, "Stay, stay, — Doctor Shonson is going to say something."

Johnson had a way of contracting the names of his friends: as Beauclerk, Beau; Boswell, Bozzy; Langton, Lanky, Murphy, Mur; Sheridan, Sherry. I remember one day, when Tom Davies was telling that Dr. Johnson said, "We are all in labour for a name to *Goldy's* play," Goldsmith seemed displeased that such a liberty should be taken with his name, and said, "I have often desired him not to call me *Goldy*."

Goldsmith now seemed very angry that Johnson was going to be a traveller; said "he would be a dead weight for me to carry, and that I should never be able to lug him along through the Highlands and Hebrides." Nor would he patiently allow me to enlarge upon Johnson's wonderful abilities; but exclaimed, "Is he like Burke, who winds into a subject like a serpent?" "But (said I) Johnson is the Hercules who strangled serpents in his cradle."

Dr. Johnson was obliged, by indisposition, to leave the company early. Chambers, as is common on such occasions,

prescribed various remedies to him. JOHNSON. (fretted by pain,) "Pr'ythee don't tease me. Stay till I am well, and then you shall tell me how to cure myself." One of our friends, who had that day employed Mr. Chambers to draw his will, devising his estate to his three sisters, in preference to a remote heir male, Johnson called them "three *dowdies*," and said, with as high a spirit as the boldest Baron in the most perfect days of the feudal system, "An ancient estate should always go to males. It is mighty foolish to let a stranger have it because he marries your daughter, and takes your name. As for an estate newly acquired by trade, you may give it, if you will, to the dog *Towser*, and let him keep his *own* name."

He now laughed immoderately at our friend's making his will; called him the *testator*, and added, "I dare say he thinks he has done a mighty thing. He'll call up the landlord of the first inn on the road; and, after a suitable preface upon mortality and the uncertainty of life, will tell him that he should not delay making his will; 'and here, Sir,' will he say, 'is my will, which I have just made, with the assistance of one of the ablest lawyers in the kingdom'; and he will read it to him (laughing all the time). I trust you have had more conscience than to make him say, 'being of sound understanding'; ha, ha, ha! I hope he has left me a legacy. I'd have his will turned into verse, like a ballad."

Mr. Chambers did not by any means relish this jocularity upon a matter of which *pars magna fuit*, and seemed impatient till he got rid of us. Johnson could not stop his merriment, but continued it all the way till he got without the Temple-gate. He then burst into such a fit of laughter, that he appeared to be almost in a convulsion; and, in order to support himself, laid hold of one of the posts at the side of the foot pavement, and sent forth peals so loud, that in the silence of the night his voice seemed to resound from Temple-bar to Fleet-ditch. This most ludicrous exhibition of the awful, melancholy, and venerable Johnson,° happened well to counteract the feelings of sadness which I used to experience

when parting with him for a considerable time. I accompanied him to his door, where he gave me his blessing.

He records of himself this year, "Between Easter and Whitsuntide, having always considered that time as propitious to study, I attempted to learn the Low Dutch language." Various notes of his studies appear on different days, in his manuscript diary of this year; such as, "*Inchoavi lectionem Pentateuchi — Finivi lectionem Conf. Fab. Burdonum. — Legi primum actum Troadum. — Legi Dissertationem Clerici postremam de Pent. — 2 of Clark's Sermons. — L. Appolonii pugnam Betriciam. — L. centum versus Homeri.*" Let this serve as a specimen of what accessions of literature he was perpetually infusing into his mind, while he charged himself with idleness.

His stay in Scotland was from the 18th of August till the 22d of November. He saw the four Universities of Scotland, its three principal cities, and as much of the Highland and insular life as was sufficient for his philosophical contemplation. I had the pleasure of accompanying him during the whole of his journey. He was respectfully entertained by the great, the learned, and the elegant, wherever he went; nor was he less delighted with the hospitality which he experienced in humbler life.

To Boswell.

"I CAME home last night, without any incommodity, danger, or weariness, and am ready to begin a new journey. I shall go to Oxford on Monday. I know Mrs. Boswell wished me well to go; her wishes have not been disappointed.° SAM. JOHNSON."

Boswell to Dr. Johnson.

"You promised me an inscription for a print to be taken from an historical picture of Mary, Queen of Scots, being forced to resign her crown, which Mr. Hamilton at Rome has painted for me. The two following have been sent to me:

"'*Maria Scotorum Regina* ° *meliori seculo digna, jus regium civibus seditiosis invita resignat.*'

"'*Cives seditiosi Mariam Scotorum Reginam sese muneri abdicare invitam cogunt.*'"

To Boswell.

"Of poor dear Dr. Goldsmith there is little to be told, more than the papers have made publick. He died of a fever, made, I am afraid, more violent by uneasiness of mind. His debts began to be heavy, and all his resources were exhausted. Sir Joshua is of opinion that he owed not less than two thousand pounds. Was ever poet so trusted before?

"You may, if you please, put the inscription thus: '*Maria Scotorum Regina nata* 15—, *a suis in exilium acta* 15—, *ab hospitâ necî data* 15—.' You must find the years. Sam. Johnson."

To Bennet Langton.

"If you have the Latin version of *Busy, curious, thirsty fly*, be so kind as to transcribe and send it. I wrote the following tetrastick ° on poor Goldsmith:

"Τὸν τάφον εἰσοράας τὸν 'Ολιβάροιο, κονίην
Ἄφροσι μὴ σεμνὴν, Ξεῖνε, πόδεσσι πάτει·
Οἵδε μέμηλε φύσις, μέτρων χάρις, ἔργα παλαιῶν
Κλαίετε ποιητὴν, ἱστορικὸν, φυσικόν."

Parliament having been dissolved, and his friend, Mr. Thrale, who was a steady supporter of government, having again to encounter the storm of a contested election, he wrote a short political pamphlet, entitled "The Patriot." It was written with energetick vivacity; and, except those passages in which it endeavours to vindicate the glaring outrage of the House of Commons in the case of the Middlesex election, and to justify the attempt to reduce our fellow-subjects in America to unconditional submission, it contained an admirable display

of the properties of a real patriot, in the original and genuine sense; — a sincere, steady, rational, and unbiassed friend to the interests and prosperity of his King and country.

To Boswell.

"I am going to write about the Americans.° If you have picked up any hints among your lawyers, who are great masters of the law of nations, or if your own mind suggest any thing, let me know. But mum, it is a secret."

"I am surprised that, knowing as you do the disposition of your countrymen to tell lies° in favour of each other, you can be at all affected by any reports that circulate among them. Macpherson° never in his life offered me a sight of any original or of any evidence of any kind; but thought only of intimidating me by noise and threats, till my last answer, — that I would not be deterred from detecting what I thought a cheat, by the menaces of a ruffian — put an end to our correspondence.

"The state of the question is this. He, and Dr. Blair, whom I consider as deceived, say, that he copied the poem from old manuscripts. His copies, if he had them, and I believe him to have none, are nothing. Where are the manuscripts? They can be shewn if they exist, but they were never shown. *De non existentibus et non apparentibus*, says our law, *eadem est ratio*. No man has a claim to credit upon his own word, when better evidence, if he had it, may be easily produced. But so far as we can find, the Erse language was never written till very lately for the purposes of religion. A nation that cannot write, or a language that was never written, has no manuscripts. Sam. Johnson."

Mr. Macpherson little knew the character of Dr. Johnson, if he supposed that he could be easily intimidated; for no man was ever more remarkable for personal courage. One day, at Mr. Beauclerk's house in the country, when two large dogs were fighting, he went up to them, and beat them till they separated; and at another time, when told of the danger

there was that a gun might burst if charged with many balls, he put in six or seven and fired it off against a wall. Mr. Langton told me, that when they were swimming together near Oxford, he cautioned Dr. Johnson against a pool, which was reckoned particularly dangerous; upon which Johnson directly swam into it. He told me himself that one night he was attacked in the street by four men, to whom he would not yield, but kept them all at bay, till the watch came up, and carried both him and them to the round-house. In the play-house at Lichfield, as Mr. Garrick informed me, Johnson having for a moment quitted a chair which was placed for him between the side-scenes, a gentleman took possession of it, and when Johnson on his return civilly demanded his seat, rudely refused to give it up; upon which Johnson laid hold of it, and tossed him and the chair into the pit. Foote, who so successfully revived the old comedy, by exhibiting living characters, had resolved to imitate Johnson on the stage, expecting great profits from his ridicule of so celebrated a man. Johnson being informed of his intention, and being at dinner at Mr. Thomas Davies's the bookseller, from whom I had the story, he asked Mr. Davies "what was the common price of an oak stick:" and being answered six-pence, "Why then, Sir, (said he,) give me leave to send your servant to purchase me a shilling one. I'll have a double quantity; for I am told Foote means to *take me off*, as he calls it, and I am determined the fellow shall not do it with impunity." Davies took care to acquaint Foote of this, which effectually checked the wantonness of the mimick. Mr. Macpherson's menaces made Johnson provide himself with the same implement of defence; and had he been attacked, I have no doubt that, old as he was, he would have made his corporal prowess be felt as much as his intellectual.

Johnson treated Scotland no worse than he did even his best friends, whose characters he used to give as they appeared to him, both in light and shade. Sir Joshua Reynolds explained his conduct thus: "He was fond of discrimination, which he could not show without pointing out the bad as well

as the good in every character; and as his friends were those whose characters he knew best, they afforded him the best opportunity for showing the acuteness of his judgment."

"None of us, (said he,) would be offended if a foreigner who has travelled here should say that vines and olives don't grow in England. When I find a Scotchman, to whom an Englishman is as a Scotchman, that Scotchman shall be as an Englishman to me." I have deposited in the British Museum the following note in answer to one from me, asking if he would meet me at dinner at the Mitre, though a friend of mine, a Scotchman, was to be there: — "Mr. Johnson does not see why Mr. Boswell should suppose a Scotchman less acceptable than any other man. He will be at the Mitre."

All the miserable cavillings against his "Journey," in newspapers, magazines, and other fugitive publications, I can speak from certain knowledge, only furnished him with sport. At last there came out a scurrilous volume. "This fellow must be a blockhead. They don't know how to go about their abuse. Who will read a five shilling book against me? No, Sir, if they had wit, they should have kept pelting me with pamphlets."

The doubts which I had ventured to state as to the justice and wisdom of the conduct of Great-Britain towards the American colonies he had altogether disregarded; and had recently published a pamphlet, entitled "Taxation no Tyranny; an answer to the Resolutions and Address of the American Congress." As early as 1769, he had said of them, "Sir, they are a race of convicts, and ought to be thankful for any thing we allow them short of hanging." Of this performance I avoided to talk with him; for I had now formed a clear and settled opinion that the people of America were well warranted to resist a claim that their fellow-subjects in the mother-country should have the entire command of their fortunes, by taxing them without their own consent; and the extreme violence which it breathed, appeared to me unsuitable to the mildness of a christian philosopher. Positive assertion, sarcastical severity, and extravagant

ridicule, which he himself reprobated as a test of truth, were united in this rhapsody.

That this pamphlet was written at the desire of those who were then in power, I have no doubt; and, indeed, he owned to me, that it had been revised and curtailed by some of them. He told me, that they had struck out one passage, to this effect: "That the Colonists could with no solidity argue from their not having been taxed while in their infancy, that they should not now be taxed. We do not put a calf into the plow; we wait till he is an ox." He said, "They struck it out either critically as too ludicrous, or politically as too exasperating."

After the paragraph which now concludes the pamphlet, there followed this, in which he certainly means the great Earl of Chatham, and glances at a certain popular Lord Chancellor.

"*If, by the fortune of war, they drive us utterly away, what they will do next can only be conjectured. If a new monarchy is erected, they will want a* KING. *He who first takes into his hand the sceptre of America, should have a name of good omen.* WILLIAM *has been known both a conqueror and deliverer; and perhaps England, however contemned, might yet supply them with* ANOTHER WILLIAM. *Whigs, indeed, are not willing to be governed; and it is possible that* KING WILLIAM *may be strongly inclined to guide their measures; but Whigs have been cheated like other mortals, and suffered their leader to become their tyrant, under the name of their* PROTECTOR. *What more they will receive from England, no man can tell. In their rudiments of empire they may want a* CHANCELLOR.°

"*Their numbers are, at present, not quite sufficient for the greatness which, in some form of government or other, is to rival the ancient monarchies; but by Dr. Franklin's rule of progression, they will, in a century and a quarter, be more than equal to the inhabitants of Europe. When the Whigs of America are thus multiplied, let the Princes of the earth tremble in their palaces. If they should continue to double and to double, their own hemisphere would not contain them. But let not our*

boldest oppugners of authority look forward with delight to this futurity of Whiggism."

My old and most intimate friend, the Reverend Mr. Temple,[3] wrote, "How can your great, I will not say your *pious*, but your *moral* friend, support the barbarous measures of administration, which they have not the face to ask even their infidel pensioner Hume to defend?"

JOHNSON. "There are few ways in which a man can be more innocently employed than in getting money."

Mr. Strahan had taken a poor boy from the country as an apprentice, upon Johnson's recommendation. Johnson enquired after him, "Mr. Strahan, let me have five guineas on account, and I'll give this boy one. Nay, if a man recommends a boy, and does nothing for him, it is sad work. Call him down." I followed him into the court-yard, behind Mr. Strahan's house; and there I had a proof of what I had heard him profess, that he talked alike to all. "Some people tell you that they let themselves down to the capacity of their hearers. I never do that. I speak uniformly, in as intelligible a manner as I can."

"Well, my boy, how do you go on?" — "Pretty well, Sir; but they are afraid I an't strong enough for some parts of the business." JOHNSON. "Why, I shall be sorry for it; for when you consider with how little mental power and corporeal labour a printer can get a guinea a week, it is a very desirable occupation for you. Do you hear, — take all the pains you can; and if this does not do, we must think of some other way of life for you. There's a guinea."

The slow and sonorous solemnity with which, while he bent himself down, he addressed a little thick short-legged boy, contrasted with the boy's awkwardness and awe, could not but excite some ludicrous emotions.

I met him at Drury-lane play-house in the evening. Sir Joshua Reynolds, at Mrs. Abington's request, had promised to bring a body of wits to her benefit; and secured forty places in the front boxes. Johnson sat on the seat directly behind me; and as he could neither see nor hear at such a

distance from the stage, he was wrapped up in grave abstraction, and seemed quite a cloud, amidst all the sunshine of glitter and gaiety. I wondered at his patience in sitting out a play of five acts, and a farce of two.

At Mr. Beauclerk's, where I supped, was Mr. Garrick, whom I made happy with Johnson's praise of his prologues; and I suppose, in gratitude to him, he took up one of his favourite topicks, the nationality of the Scotch, which he maintained in a pleasant manner, with the aid of a little poetical fiction. "Come, come, don't deny it: they are really national. Why, now, the Adams are as liberal-minded men as any in the world: but, I don't know how it is, all their workmen are Scotch. You are, to be sure, wonderfully free from that nationality: but so it happens that you employ the only Scotch shoeblack in London." He imitated the manner of his old master with ludicrous exaggeration; repeating, with pauses and half-whistlings interjected,

> "*Os homini sublime dedit, — cœlumque tueri*
> *Iussit, — et erectos ad sidera — tollere vultus;*"

looking downwards all the time, and, while pronouncing the four last words, absolutely touching the ground with a kind of contorted gesticulation.

Garrick could imitate Johnson very exactly. I recollect his exhibiting him to me one day, as if saying, "Davy has some convivial pleasantry about him, but 'tis a futile fellow;" which he uttered perfectly with the tone and air of Johnson.

I dined with Johnson at Mr. Thrale's. He attacked Gray, calling him a dull fellow. "No, Sir, there are but two good stanzas in Gray's poetry, which are in his 'Elegy in a Country Churchyard.'

> "For who to dumb forgetfulness a prey," &c.

mistaking one word: for instead of *precincts* he said *confines*. He added, "The other stanza I forget."

One of the company attempted to rally him on his late appearance at the theatre: but had reason to repent of his

temerity. "Why, Sir, did you go to Mrs. Abington's benefit? Did you see?" JOHNSON. "No, Sir." "Did you hear?" JOHNSON. "No, Sir." "Why then, Sir, did you go?" JOHNSON. "Because, Sir, she is a favourite of the publick; and when the publick cares the thousandth part for you that it does for her, I will go to your benefit too."

Next morning I won a small bet from Lady Diana Beauclerk, by asking him as to one of his particularities, which her Ladyship laid I durst not do. It seems he had been frequently observed at the club to put into his pocket the Seville oranges, after he had squeezed the juice of them into the drink which he made for himself. Beauclerk and Garrick talked of it to me, and seemed to think that he had a strange unwillingness to be discovered. We could not divine what he did with them; and this was the bold question to be put. I saw on his table the spoils of the preceding night, some fresh peels nicely scraped and cut into pieces. "O, Sir, (said I,) I now partly see what you do with the squeezed oranges which you put into your pocket at the Club." JOHNSON. "I have a great love for them." BOSWELL. "And pray, Sir, what do you do with them? You scrape them it seems very neatly, and what next?" JOHNSON. "Let them dry, Sir." BOSWELL. "And what next?" JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, you shall know their fate no further." BOSWELL "Then the world must be left in the dark. It must be said (assuming a mock solemnity,) he scraped them and let them dry, but what he did with them next, he never could be prevailed upon to tell." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, you should say it more emphatically: he could not be prevailed upon, even by his dearest friends, to tell."

He had this morning received his Diploma as Doctor of Laws from the University of Oxford. He did not vaunt of his new dignity, but I understood he was highly pleased with it.

He had been in the company of a gentleman whose extraordinary travels had been much the subject of conversation. "I should say he is neither abounding nor deficient in sense." BOSWELL. "But will you not allow him a nobleness of resolution, in penetrating into distant regions?" JOHNSON.

"That, Sir, is not to the present purpose: We are talking of sense. A fighting cock has a nobleness of resolution."

His "Taxation no Tyranny" being mentioned, he said, "I think I have not been attacked enough for it. Attack is the re-action; I never think I have hit hard, unless it re-bounds." BOSWELL. "I don't know, Sir, what you would be at. Five or six shots of small arms in every newspaper, and repeated cannonading in pamphlets, might, I think, satisfy you. But, Sir, you'll never make out this match, of which we have talked, with a certain political lady, since you are so severe against her principles." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, I have the better chance for that. She is like the Amazons of old; she must be courted by the sword. But I have not been severe upon her." BOSWELL. "Yes, Sir, you have made her ridiculous." JOHNSON. "That was already done, Sir. To endeavour to make *her* ridiculous, is like blacking the chimney."

The landlord at Ellon in Scotland said, he was the greatest man in England, — next to Lord Mansfield. "Ay, Sir, (said he,) the exception defined the idea. A Scotchman could go no further:

'The force of Nature could no further go.'"

Lady Miller's collection of verses by fashionable people, in competition for honorary prizes, being mentioned, "*Bouts rimés*" (said he) is a mere conceit, and an *old* conceit *now*." BOSWELL. "The Duchess of Northumberland wrote." JOHNSON. "Nobody will say anything to a lady of her high rank. But I should be apt to throw . . .'s verses in his face."

I talked of the cheerfulness of Fleet-street, owing to the constant quick succession of people passing. JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, Fleet-street has a very animated appearance: but I think the full tide of human existence is at Charing-cross."

He made the common remark on the unhappiness which men who have led a busy life experience, when they retire in expectation of enjoying themselves at ease. "An eminent

tallow-chandler in London, who had acquired a considerable fortune, gave up the trade in favour of his foreman, and went to live at a country-house near town. He soon grew weary, and paid frequent visits to his old shop, where he desired they might let him know their *melting-days*, and he would come and assist them."

He roared with prodigious violence against George the Second. When he ceased, Moody interjected, in an Irish tone, and with a comick look, "Ah! poor George the Second."

Dr. Thomas Campbell ° had come from Ireland to London, principally to see Dr. Johnson. JOHNSON. "I should not have wished to be dead to disappoint Campbell, had he been so foolish as you represent him; but I should have wished to have been a hundred miles off." He laughed with some complacency, when I told him Campbell's odd expression to me concerning him: "That having seen such a man, was a thing to talk of a century hence," — as if he could live so long.

While Sir Joshua Reynolds and Mr. Langton were carrying on a dialogue which engaged them earnestly, he, in the midst of it, broke out, "Pennant tells of Bears. —" They went on, which he being dull of hearing, did not perceive, or, if he did, was not willing to break off his talk; so he continued to vociferate his remarks, and *Bear* ("like a word in a catch" as Beauclerk said,) was repeatedly heard at intervals, which coming from him who, by those who did not know him, had been so often assimilated to that ferocious animal, while we who were sitting around could hardly stifle laughter, produced a very ludicrous effect. Silence having ensued, he proceeded: "We are told that the black bear is innocent; but I should not like to trust myself with him." Mr. Gibbon muttered, in a low tone of voice, "I should not like to trust myself with *you*."

Johnson suddenly uttered, in a strong determined tone, "Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel." But let it be considered, that he did not mean a real and generous love of our country, but that pretended patriotism which so many, in all ages and countries, have made a cloak for self-interest.

Mrs. Pritchard being mentioned, he said, "Her playing was quite mechanical. It is wonderful how little mind she had. Sir, she had never read the tragedy of Macbeth all through. She no more thought of the play out of which her part was taken, than a shoemaker thinks of the skin, out of which the piece of leather, of which he is making a pair of shoes, is cut."

I dined with him at Mr. Thrale's. Johnson had supped the night before at Mrs. Abington's with some fashionable people whom he named; and he seemed much pleased with having made one in so elegant a circle. Nor did he omit to pique his *mistress* a little with jealousy of her housewifery; for he said, (with a smile,) "Mrs. Abington's jelly, my dear lady, was better than yours."

Being asked if he really was of opinion, that a man was not sometimes happy in the moment that was present, he answered, "Never, but when he is drunk."

Johnson repeated the common remark, that "as there is no necessity for our having poetry at all, it being merely a luxury, an instrument of pleasure, it can have no value, unless when exquisite in its kind." I declared myself not satisfied. "Why, then, Sir, (said he,) Horace and you must settle it." He was not much in the humour of talking.

When a gentleman told him he had bought a suit of lace for his lady, he said, "Well, Sir, you have done a good thing and a wise thing. No money is better spent than what is laid out for domestick satisfaction. A man is pleased that his wife is drest as well as other people; and a wife is pleased that she is drest."

Good-Friday, I repaired to him in the morning, according to my usual custom on that day, and breakfasted with him. I observed that he fasted so very strictly, that he did not even taste bread, and took no milk with his tea; I suppose because it is a kind of animal food.

He observed, "All knowledge is of itself of some value. There is nothing so minute or inconsiderable, that I would not rather know it than not. In the same manner, all power,

of whatever sort, is of itself desirable. A man would not submit to learn to hem a ruffle, of his wife, or his wife's maid: but if a mere wish could attain it, he would rather wish to be able to hem a ruffle."

He was pleased to say, "If you come to settle here, we will have one day in the week on which we will meet by ourselves. That is the happiest conversation where there is no competition, no vanity, but a calm quiet interchange of sentiments."

I maintained that Horace was wrong in placing happiness in *Nil admirari*. JOHNSON. "Sir, as a man advances in life, he gets what is better than admiration, — judgement, to estimate things at their true value. Sir, admiration and love are like being intoxicated with champagne; judgement and friendship like being enlivened."

"General principles must be had from books, which, however, must be brought to the test of real life. In conversation you never get a system."

He and I were engaged to go with Sir Joshua Reynolds to dine with Mr. Cambridge, at his beautiful villa on the banks of the Thames, near Twickenham. Dr. Johnson's tardiness was such, that Sir Joshua, who had an appointment at Richmond, early in the day, was obliged to go by himself on horseback, leaving his coach to Johnson and me. Johnson was in such good spirits, that everything seemed to please him as we drove along.

He thought portrait-painting an improper employment for a woman. "Publick practice of any art, and staring in men's faces, is very indelicate in a female." I happened to start a question, whether when a man knows that some of his intimate friends are invited to the house of another friend, with whom they are all equally intimate, he may join them without an invitation. JOHNSON. "No, Sir; he is not to go when he is not invited. They may be invited on purpose to abuse him" (smiling).

JOHNSON. "It is wonderful, Sir, how rare a quality good humour is in life. We meet with very few good humoured men." I mentioned four of our friends, none of whom he

would allow to be good humoured. One was *acid*, another was *muddy*, and to the others he had objections which have escaped me. Then, shaking his head and stretching himself at ease in the coach, and smiling with much complacency, he turned to me and said, "I look upon *myself* as a good humoured fellow."

I read one ludicrous imitation of his style,° by Mr. Maclaurin. "This (said he) is the best. But I could caricature my own style much better myself." He defended his remark upon the general insufficiency of education in Scotland; and confirmed to me the authenticity of his witty saying on the learning of the Scotch; — "Their learning is like bread in a besieged town: every man gets a little, but no man gets a full meal."

No sooner had we made our bow to Mr. Cambridge, in his library, than Johnson ran eagerly to one side of the room intent on poring over the backs of the books. Sir Joshua observed, (aside) "He runs to the books as I do to the pictures: but I have the advantage. I can see much more of the pictures than he can of the books." Mr. Cambridge, upon this, politely said, "Dr. Johnson, I am going, with your pardon, to accuse myself, for I have the same custom which I perceive you have. But it seems odd that one should have such a desire to look at the backs of books." Johnson, ever ready for contest, instantly started from his reverie, wheeled about and answered, "Sir, the reason is very plain. Knowledge is of two kinds. We know a subject ourselves, or we know where we can find information upon it. When we enquire into any subject, the first thing we have to do is to know what books have treated of it. This leads us to look at catalogues, and the backs of books in libraries." Sir Joshua observed to me the extraordinary promptitude with which Johnson flew upon an argument. "Yes, (said I) he has no formal preparation, no flourishing with his sword; he is through your body in an instant."

JOHNSON. "We must consider how very little history there is; I mean real authentick history. That certain Kings

reigned, and certain battles were fought, we can depend upon as true; but all the colouring, all the philosophy of history is conjecture." Mr. Gibbon, who must at that time have been employed upon his history, was present; but did not step forth in defence of that species of writing. He probably did not like to *trust* himself with JOHNSON!

"The Beggar's Opera," and the common question, whether it was pernicious in its effects, having been introduced; — JOHNSON. "I myself am of opinion, that more influence has been ascribed to 'The Beggar's Opera,' than it in reality ever had; for I do not believe that any man was ever made a rogue by being present at its representation. At the same time I do not deny that it may have some influence, by making the character of a rogue familiar, and in some degree pleasing." Then collecting himself, as it were, to give a heavy stroke: "There is in it such a *labefactation* of all principles as may be injurious to morality." While he pronounced this response, we sat in a comical sort of restraint, smothering a laugh.

JOHNSON. "Would not a gentleman be disgraced by having his wife singing publickly for hire? I know not if I should not *prepare* myself for a publick singer, as readily as let my wife be one."

JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, absolute princes seldom do any harm. But they who are governed by them are governed by chance. There is no security for good government." CAMBRIDGE. "There have been many sad victims to absolute government." JOHNSON. "So, Sir, have there been to popular factions." BOSWELL. "The question is, which is worst, one wild beast or many?"

Johnson praised "THE SPECTATOR," particularly the character of Sir Roger de Coverley. He said, "Sir Roger did not die a violent death, as has been generally fancied. He was not killed; he died only because others were to die, and because his death afforded an opportunity to Addison for some very fine writing. I never could see why Sir Roger is represented as a little cracked. It appears to me that the story of the

widow was intended to have something superinduced upon it; but the superstructure did not come."

Somebody found fault with writing verses in a dead language. JOHNSON. "I would have as many of these as possible; I would have verses in every language that there are the means of acquiring. Nobody imagines that an University is to have at once two hundred poets; but it should be able to shew two hundred scholars. And I would have at every coronation, and every death of a king, every *Gaudium*,° and every *Luctus*, University-verses, in as many languages as can be acquired. I would have the world to be thus told, 'Here is a school where everything may be learnt.'"

"THERE is a difference between majority and superiority; majority is applied to number, and superiority to power; and power like many other things, is to be estimated *non numero sed pondere*. Now though the greater *number* is not corrupt, the greater *weight* is corrupt, so that corruption predominates in the borough, taken *collectively*, though, perhaps, taken *numerically*, the greater part may be uncorrupt. All societies, great and small, subsist upon this condition; that as the individuals derive advantages from union, they may likewise suffer inconveniences; that as those who do nothing, and sometimes those who do ill, will have the honours and emoluments of general virtue and general prosperity, so those likewise who do nothing, or perhaps do well, must be involved in the consequences of predominant corruption."

We went together and visited the mansions of Bedlam.° He had once been there before and I had heard Foote give a very entertaining account of Johnson's happening to have his attention arrested by a man who was very furious, and who, while beating his straw, supposed it was William, Duke of Cumberland, whom he was punishing for his cruelties in Scotland, in 1746.

Talking of an acquaintance of ours, distinguished for knowing an uncommon variety of miscellaneous articles both in antiquities and polite literature, he observed, "You know, Sir, he runs about with little weight upon his mind." And

talking of another very ingenious gentleman, who from the warmth of his temper was at variance with many of his acquaintance, and wished to avoid them, he said, "Sir, he leads the life of an outlaw."

He had been so good as to assign me a room in his house, where I might sleep occasionally when I happened to sit with him to a late hour. I asked Johnson whether I might go to a consultation with another lawyer upon Sunday. JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, when you are of consequence enough to oppose the practice of consulting upon Sunday, you should do it: but you may go now. It is not criminal, though it is not what one should do who is anxious for the preservation and increase of piety, to which a peculiar observance of Sunday is a great help. The distinction is clear between what is of moral and what is of ritual obligation."

I breakfasted with him by invitation, accompanied by Mr. Andrew Crosbie. His tea and rolls and butter, and whole breakfast apparatus were all in such decorum, and his behaviour was so courteous, that Colonel Stopford was quite surprized, and wondered at his having heard so much said of Johnson's slovenliness and roughness.

It being asked whether it was reasonable for a man to be angry at another whom a woman had preferred to him,— JOHNSON. "I do not see, Sir, that it is reasonable for a man to be angry at another whom a woman has preferred to him: but angry he is, no doubt; and he is loath to be angry at himself."

Concerning Garrick: "He has not Latin enough. He finds out the Latin by the meaning rather than the meaning by the Latin."

Johnson's laugh was as remarkable as any circumstance in his manner. It was a kind of good humoured growl. Tom Davies described it drolly enough: "He laughs like a rhinoceros."

To BOSWELL.

"OF a standing fact there ought to be no controversy; if there are men with tails, catch an *homo caudatus;* if there was

writing of old in the Highlands or Hebrides, in the Erse language, produce the manuscripts. Where men write they will write to one another, and some of their letters, in families studious of their ancestry, will be kept. In Wales there are many manuscripts.

"Mrs. Thrale was so entertained with your 'Journal,' that she almost read herself blind. She has a great regard for you.

"Never, my dear Sir, do you take it into your head to think that I do not love you; you may settle yourself in full confidence both of my love and my esteem: I love you as a kind man, I value you as a worthy man, and hope in time to reverence you as a man of exemplary piety. I hold you, as Hamlet has it, 'in my heart of hearts.' SAM. JOHNSON."

What he mentions in such light terms as, "I am to set out to-morrow on another journey," I soon afterwards discovered was no less than a tour to France with Mr. and Mrs. Thrale. This was the only time in his life that he went upon the Continent.

TO BOSWELL.

"Paris, Oct. 22, 1775.

"WE have been to-day at Versailles.° You have seen it, and I shall not describe it. We came yesterday from Fontainebleau, where the Court is now. We went to see the King and Queen at dinner, and the Queen was so impressed by Miss,° that she sent one of the Gentlemen to enquire who she was. Mr. Thrale is very liberal, and keeps us two coaches, and a very fine table; but I think our cookery very bad. Mrs. Thrale got into a convent of English nuns, and I talked with her through the grate, and I am very kindly used by the English Benedictine friars. But upon the whole I cannot make much acquaintance here; and though the churches, palaces, and some private houses are very magnificent, there is no very great pleasure after having seen many, in seeing more; at least the pleasure, whatever it be, must some time have an

end, and we are beginning to think when we shall come home. Mr. Thrale calculates that as we left Streatham on the fifteenth of September, we shall see it again about the fifteenth of November. SAM. JOHNSON."

It is to be regretted, that he did not write an account of his travels in France. One small paper-book, however, entitled, "FRANCE II." is in my possession. It is a diurnal register of his life and observations, from the 10th of October to the 4th of November.

"We saw the *Ecole Militaire,* in which one hundred and fifty young boys are educated for the army.

"We visited the Observatory, a large building of a great height. The upper stones of the parapet very large, but not cramped with iron. The flat on the top is very extensive; but on the insulated part there is no parapet. Though it was broad enough, I did not care to go upon it.

"We want to see *Hôtel de Chatlois,* a house not very large, but very elegant.

"Thence we went to St. Roque's church.

"We went to the Gobelins. — Tapestry makes a good picture: — imitates flesh exactly. — One piece with a gold ground; — the birds not exactly coloured. — Thence we went to the King's Cabinet; — very neat, not, perhaps, perfect. — Gold ore. — Candles of the candle-tree. — Seeds. — Woods. Thence to Gagnier's house, where I saw rooms nine, furnished with a profusion of wealth and elegance which I never had seen before. — Vases. — Pictures. — The dragon china. — The lustre said to be of crystal, and to have cost 3,500 l. — The whole furniture said to have cost 125,000 l. — Damask hangings covered with pictures. — Porphyry. — This house struck me.

"We went to the house of Mr. Argenson, which was almost wainscotted with looking-glasses and covered with gold. The ladies' closet wainscotted with large squares of glass over painted paper. They always place mirrours to reflect their rooms.

"Then we went to Julien's, the Treasurer of the Clergy: —

30,000 l. a year. — The house has no very large room, but is set with mirrours, and covered with gold. — Books of wood here, and in another library.

"At D——'s I looked into the books in the lady's closet, and, in contempt, shewed them to Mr. T. – *Prince Titi; Bibl. des Fées*, and other books. — She was offended, and shut up, as we heard afterwards, her apartment.

"We saw the *Palais Marchand*, and the Courts of Justice, civil and criminal. — Queries on the *Sellette*. — This building has the old Gothick passages, and a great appearance of antiquity. — Three hundred prisoners sometimes in the gaol.

"The Palais Royal very grand, large, and lofty. — A very great collection of pictures. – Three of Raphael. — Two Holy Family. — One small piece of M. Angelo. — One room of Rubens. – I thought the pictures of Raphael fine.

"The Thuilleries. — Statues. — Venus. — Æn. and Anchises in his arms. — Nilus. – Many more. — The walks not open to mean persons. — Chairs at night hired for two sous a piece. — Pont tournant.

"Austin nuns. — Grate. — Mrs. Fermor, Abbess.° — She knew Pope, and thought him disagreeable.

"At the Boulevards saw nothing, yet was glad to be there. — Rope-dancing and farce. – Egg dance.

"N. [Note.] Near Paris, whether on week-days or Sundays, the roads empty.

"Oct. 17. Tuesday. At the Palais Marchand I bought

	A snuff-box,	24L.°
		6
	Table book	15
	Scissars 3 p [pair]	18
		63 — 2 12 6

"The Palais Bourbon, belonging to the Prince of Condé. Only one small wing shewn; – lofty; – splendid; – gold and glass. — The battles of the great Condé are painted in one of the rooms. The present Prince a grandsire at thirty-nine.

"The sight of palaces, and other great buildings, leaves no very distinct images, unless to those who talk of them. As I entered, my wife was in my mind: she would have been pleased. Having now nobody to please, I am little pleased.

"N. In France there is no middle rank.

"So many shops open, that Sunday is little distinguished at Paris. — The palaces of Louvre and Thuilleries granted out in lodgings.

"The French beds commended. — Much of the marble, only paste.

"We went to Fontainebleau, which we found a large mean town, crowded with people. — The forest thick with woods, very extensive. — Manucci secured us lodgings. — The appearance of the country pleasant. — No hills, few streams, only one hedge. — I remember no chapels nor crosses on the road. — Pavement still, and rows of trees.

"At Court, we saw the apartments; — the King's bed-chamber and council-chamber extremely splendid. — Persons of all ranks in the external rooms through which the family passes.

"The introductor came to us; — civil to me. — Presenting. — I had scruples. — Not necessary. — We went and saw the King and Queen at dinner. — We saw the other ladies at dinner. — Madame Elizabeth, with the Princess of Guimené. — At night we went to a comedy. I neither saw nor heard.

"We saw the Queen mount in the forest.° — Brown habit; rode aside: one lady rode aside. — The Queen's horse light grey; — martingale. — She galloped.

"At night the ladies went to the opera. I refused, but should have been welcome.

"The King fed himself with his left hand as we.

"To Versailles, a mean town. Carriages of business passing. — Mean shops against the wall. Our way lay through Sêve, where the China manufacture. — Wooden bridge at Sêve, in the way to Versailles. — The palace of great extent. — The front long; I saw it not perfectly.

"Trianon is a kind of retreat appendant to Versailles. It

has an open portico; the pavement, and, I think, the pillars of marble. — There are many rooms, which I do not distinctly remember. — A table of porphyry, about five feet long, and between two or three broad, given to Louis XIV. by the Venetian State. — In the council-room almost all that was not door or window, was, I think, looking-glass. — Little Trianon is a small palace like a gentleman's house. — The upper floor paved with brick. — Little Vienne. — The court is ill paved. — The rooms at the top are small, fit to sooth the imagination with privacy. In the front of Versailles are small basons of water on the terrace, and other basons, I think, below them. There are little courts. — The great gallery is wainscotted with mirrours, not very large, but joined by frames. I suppose the large plates were not yet made. — The play-house was very large. —

"In the way I saw the Grêve, the mayor's house, and the Bastile.

"We then went to Sans-terre,° a brewer.° He brews with about as much malt as Mr. Thrale.

"The moat of the Bastile is dry.

"We visited the King's library. — I saw the *Speculum humanæ Salvationis*, rudely printed, with ink, sometimes pale, sometimes black; part supposed to be with wooden types, and part with pages cut in boards. The Bible, supposed to be older than that of Mentz, in 1462; it has no date; it is supposed to have been printed with wooden types. — I am in doubt; the print is large and fair, in two folios.

"To the Sorbonne. — The library very large, not in lattices like the King's. Their garden pretty, with covered walks, but small; yet may hold many students. The Doctors of the Sorbonne are all equal; — choose those who succeed to vacancies. — Profit little.

"I went with the Prior to St. Cloud, to see Dr. Hooke. — We walked round the palace, and had some talk. — I dined with our whole company at the Monastery. — In the library, *Berauld*, — *Cymon*, — *Titus*, from Boccace. — *Oratio Dominicabialis* to the Virgin, from Petrarch.

"We saw the china at Sêve, cut, glazed, painted. Bellevue, a pleasing house, not great: fine prospect. — Meudon, an old palace. — Alexander, in Porphyry: hollow between eyes and nose, thin cheeks. — Plato and Aristotle. — Noble terrace overlooks the town. — St. Cloud. — Gallery not very high, nor grand, but pleasing. — In the rooms, Michael Angelo, drawn by himself, Sir Thomas More, Des Cartes. — Gilded wainscot, so common that it is not minded.

"I visited the Grand Chartreux built by St. Louis. — It is built for forty, but contains only twenty-four, and will not maintain more.

"We saw the palace and gardens of Luxembourg, but the gallery was shut.

"Hotel — a guinea a day. — Coach three guineas a week. — Valet de place, three l. a day. — *Quaitcouvreur*, a guinea a week. — Ordinary dinner, six l. a head. — Our ordinary seems to be about five guineas a day. — Our extraordinary expences, as diversions, gratuities, clothes, I cannot reckon. — Our travelling is ten guineas a day.

"White stockings, 18l. Wig. — Hat.

"We saw the boarding-school, — The *Enfans trouvés*. — A room with about eighty-six children in cradles, as sweet as a parlour. — They lose a third; take in to perhaps more than seven [years old]; put them to trades; pin to them the papers sent with them. — Want nurses. — Saw their chapel.

"I lived at the Benedictines; meagre day; soup meagre, herrings, eels, both with sauce; fryed fish; lentils, tasteless in themselves. In the library; where I found *Maffeus's de Historiâ Indicâ: Promontorium flectere, to double the Cape*. I parted very tenderly from the Prior and Friar Wilkes.

"St. Denis, a large town; the church not very large, but the middle isle is very lofty and aweful. — On the left are chapels built beyond the line of the wall, which destroy the symmetry of the sides. The organ is higher above the pavement than any I have ever seen.

"Chantilly, a seat belonging to the Prince of Condé. — This place is eminently beautified by all varieties of waters starting

up in fountains, falling in cascades, running in streams, and spread in lakes. — The water seems to be too near the house. All this water is brought from a source or river three leagues off, by an artificial canal, which for one league is carried under ground. — The house is magnificent. There is a forest, and, I think, a park. — I walked till I was very weary, and next morning my feet felt battered, and with pains in the toes.

"We came to Compiegne, a very large town, with a royal palace built round a pentagonal court."

These short notes . . . completely refute the idle notion which has been propagated, that he could not see.

The account which he gave me of his French tour, was, "Sir, I have seen all the visibilities of Paris, and around it; but to have formed an acquaintance with the people there, would have required more time than I could stay. I was just beginning to creep into acquaintance. And, Sir, I was very kindly treated by the English Benedictines, and have a cell appropriated to me in their convent.

"The great in France live very magnificently, but the rest very miserably. There is no happy middle state as in England. The shops of Paris are mean; the meat in the markets is such as would be sent to a gaol in England; and Mr. Thrale justly observed, that the cookery of the French was forced upon them by necessity; for they could not eat their meat, unless they added some taste to it. The French are an indelicate people. At Madame ——'s, a literary lady of rank, the footman took the sugar in his fingers, and threw it into my coffee. I was going to put it aside; but hearing it was made on purpose for me, I e'en tasted Tom's fingers. The same lady would needs make tea *à l'Angloise*. The spout of the tea-pot did not pour freely; she bade the footman blow into it. France is worse than Scotland in every thing but in climate. Nature has done more for the French; but they have done less for themselves than the Scotch have done."

The French were quite astonished at his figure and manner, and at his dress, which he obstinately continued exactly as in London; — his brown clothes, black stockings, and plain

shirt. An Irish gentleman said to Johnson, "Sir, you have not seen the best French players." JOHNSON. "Players, Sir! I look on them as no better than creatures set upon tables and joint stools to make faces and produce laughter, like dancing dogs." — "But, Sir, you will allow that some players are better than others?" JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, as some dogs dance better than others."

When Johnson was in France, he was generally very resolute in speaking Latin. It was a maxim with him that a man should not let himself down, by speaking a language which he speaks imperfectly. When Sir Joshua Reynolds, at one of the dinners of the Royal Academy, presented him to a Frenchman of great distinction, he would not deign to speak French, but talked Latin, though his Excellency did not understand it, owing, perhaps, to Johnson's English pronunciation: yet upon another occasion he was observed to speak French to a Frenchman of high rank, who spoke English; and being asked the reason, with some expression of surprise, — he answered, "because I think my French is as good as his English."

"When Madame de Boufflers was first in England, she was desirous to see Johnson. I accordingly went with her to his chambers in the Temple, where she was entertained with his conversation for some time. When our visit was over, she and I left him, and were got into Inner Temple-lane, when all at once I heard a noise like thunder. This was occasioned by Johnson, who it seems, upon a little recollection, had taken it into his head that he ought to have done the honours of his literary residence to a foreign lady of quality, and eager to show himself a man of gallantry, was hurrying down the staircase in violent agitation. He overtook us before we reached the Temple-gate, and brushing in between me and Madame de Boufflers, seized her hand, and conducted her to her coach. His dress was a rusty brown morning suit, a pair of old shoes by way of slippers, a little shrivelled wig sticking on the top of his head, and the sleeves of his shirt and the knees of his breeches hanging loose. A considerable crowd of people gathered round, and were not a little struck by this singular appearance."

Johnson thus characterised Voltaire:° "*Vir est acerrimi ingenii et paucarum literarum.*"

Dr. Burney informs me that, "he very frequently met Dr. Johnson at Mr. Thrale's, at Streatham, where they had many long conversations, often sitting up as long as the fire and candles lasted, and much longer than the patience of the servants subsisted."

A few of Johnson's sayings, which that gentleman recollects, shall here be inserted.

"I never take a nap after dinner but when I have had a bad night, and then the nap takes me.

"The writer of an epitaph should not be considered as saying nothing but what is strictly true. Allowance must be made for some degree of exaggerated praise. In lapidary inscriptions a man is not upon oath.

"There is now less flogging in our great schools than formerly, but then less is learned there; so that what the boys get at one end they lose at the other.

"More is learned in publick than in private schools, from emulation; there is the collision of mind with mind, or the radiation of many minds pointing to one centre. Though few boys make their own exercises, yet if a good exercise is given up, out of a great number of boys, it is made by somebody.

"I hate by-roads in education. Education is as well known, and has long been as well known, as ever it can be. Endeavouring to make children prematurely wise is useless labour. Suppose they have more knowledge at five or six years old than other children, what use can be made of it? It will be lost before it is wanted, and the waste of so much time and labour of the teacher can never be repaid. Too much is expected from precocity, and too little performed. Miss —— was an instance of early cultivation, but in what did it terminate? In marrying a little Presbyterian parson, who keeps an infant boarding-school, so that all her employment now is,

'To suckle fools, and chronicle small-beer.'

She tells the children, 'This is a cat, and that is a dog, with four legs and a tail; see there! you are much better than a cat or a dog, for you can speak.' If I had bestowed such an education on a daughter, and had discovered that she thought of marrying such a fellow, I would have sent her to the *Congress*.

"After having talked slightingly of musick, he was observed to listen very attentively while Miss Thrale played on the harpsichord, and with eagerness he called to her, 'Why don't you dash away like Burney?' Dr. Burney upon this said to him, 'I believe, Sir, we shall make a musician of you at last.' Johnson with candid complacency replied, 'Sir, I shall be glad to have a new sense° given to me.'

"He had come down one morning to the breakfast-room, and been a considerable time by himself before any body appeared. When on a subsequent day he was twitted by Mrs. Thrale for being very late, which he generally was, he defended himself by alluding to the extraordinary morning, when he had been too early. 'Madam, I do not like to come down to *vacuity*.'

"Dr. Burney having remarked that Mr. Garrick was beginning to look old, he said, 'Why, Sir, you are not to wonder at that; no man's face has had more wear and tear.'"

My father, who was one of the Judges of Scotland, and had added considerably to the estate of Auchinleck, now signified his inclination to secure it to his family in perpetuity by an entail. My father had declared a predilection for heirs general, that is, males and females indiscriminately. And in the particular case of our family, I apprehended that we were under an implied obligation, in honour and good faith, to transmit the estate by the same tenure which we held it, which was as heirs male, excluding nearer females. I therefore objected to my father's scheme. I wrote to Dr. Johnson, stating the case, with all its difficulties, earnestly requesting that he would favour me with his friendly opinion and advice.

To Boswell.

"Laws are formed by the manners and exigencies of particular times, and it is but accidental that they last longer than their causes: the limitation of feudal succession to the male arose from the obligation of the tenant to attend his chief in war.

"Suppose at one time a law that allowed only males to inherit, and during the continuance of this law many estates to have descended, passing by the females, to remoter heirs. Suppose afterwards the law repealed in correspondence with a change of manners, and women made capable of inheritance; would not then the tenure of estates be changed? Could the women have no benefit from a law in their favour? Must they be passed by upon moral principles for ever, because they were once excluded by a legal prohibition?

"Your ancestor, for some reason, disinherited his daughters; but it no more follows that he intended this act as a rule for posterity, than the disinheriting of his brother.

"If, therefore, you ask by what right your father admits daughters to inheritance, ask yourself, first, by what right you require them to be excluded. Sam. Johnson."

I had followed his recommendation and consulted Lord Hailes. "The plea of conscience (said his Lordship,) which you put, is a most respectable one, especially when *conscience* and *self* are on different sides. But I think that conscience is not well informed, and that *self* and *she* ought on this occasion to be of a side."

To Boswell.

"It cannot but occur that 'Women have natural and equitable claims as well as men, and these claims are not to be capriciously or lightly superseded or infringed.' When fiefs implied military service, it is easily discerned why females could not inherit them; but that reason is now at an end. As manners make laws, manners likewise repeal them. Sam. Johnson."

Having communicated to Lord Hailes what Dr. Johnson wrote concerning the question which perplexed me so much, his Lordship wrote to me: "Your scruples have produced more fruit than I ever expected from them; an excellent dissertation on general principles of morals and law."

I found Mrs. Thrale and him at breakfast. I was kindly welcomed. In a moment he was in a full glow of conversation, and I felt myself elevated as if brought into another state of being. Mrs. Thrale and I looked to each other while he talked, and our looks expressed our congenial admiration and affection for him. I shall ever recollect this scene with great pleasure. I exclaimed to her, "I am now intellectually *Hermippus redivivus*, I am quite restored by him, by transfusion of mind." "There are many (she replied) who admire and respect Mr. Johnson; but you and I *love* him."

He seemed very happy in the near prospect of going to Italy with Mr. and Mrs. Thrale. "But, (said he,) before leaving England I am to take a jaunt to Oxford, Birmingham, my native city Lichfield, and my old friend, Dr. Taylor's, at Ashbourne, in Derbyshire. I shall go in a few days, and you, Boswell, shall go with me."

I mentioned with much regret the extravagance of the representative of a great family in Scotland, by which there was danger of its being ruined; and as Johnson respected it for its antiquity, he joined with me in thinking it would be happy if this person should die. Mrs. Thrale seemed shocked at this. Johnson. "Nay, Madam, it is not a preference of the land to its owner; it is the preference of a family to an individual. Here is an establishment in a country, which is of importance for ages, not only to the chief but to his people; an establishment which extends upwards and downwards; that this should be destroyed by one idle fellow is a sad thing."

"If I *owe* a particular man a sum of money, I am obliged to let that man have the next money I get; but if I owe no man, I may dispose of what I get as I please. There is not a *debitum justitiæ* to a man's next heir; there is only a *debitum caritatis*. If I have a brother in want, I [illegible] from

affection to my assistance; but if I have also a brother in want, whom I like better, he has a preferable claim."

We got into a boat to cross over to Black-friars; as we moved along the Thames, I talked to him of a little volume, altogether unknown to him, advertised under the title of "*Johnsoniana*," or *Bon-Mots* of Dr. Johnson." JOHNSON. "Sir, it is a mighty impudent thing." BOSWELL. "Pray, Sir, could you have no redress if you were to prosecute a publisher for bringing out, under your name, what you never said, and ascribing to you dull stupid nonsense, or making you swear profanely, as many ignorant relaters of your *bon-mots* do?" JOHNSON. "No, Sir; there will always be some truth mixed with the falsehood, and how can it be ascertained how much is true and how much is false? Besides, Sir, what damages would a jury give me for having been represented as swearing?"

He said, "The value of every story depends on its being true. —— (naming a worthy friend of ours,) used to think a story, a story, till I shewed him that truth was essential to it. "A gentlewomen (said he) begged I would give her my arm to assist her in crossing the street, which I accordingly did; upon which she offered me a shilling, supposing me to be the watchman. I perceived that she was somewhat in liquor." This, if told by most people, would have been thought an invention; when told by Johnson, it was believed by his friends as much as if they had seen what passed.

We landed at the Temple-stairs, where we parted. I found him in the evening in Mrs. Williams' room.

"All severity that does not tend to increase good, or prevent evil, is idle. I said to the Lady Abbess of a convent, 'Madam, you are here, not for the love of virtue, but the fear of vice.' She said, 'She should remember this as long as she lived.'"

One of his friends, I remember, came to sup at a tavern with him, and too plainly discovered that he had drunk too much at dinner. When one who loved mischief asked Johnson, "Well, Sir, what did your friend say to you, as an apology

for being in such a situation?" Johnson answered, "Sir, he said all that a man *should* say: he said he was sorry for it."

We met in the morning at the Somerset coffee-house in the Strand, where we were taken up by the Oxford coach. He was accompanied by Mr. Gwyn, the architect. It was very remarkable of Johnson, that the presence of a stranger had no restraint upon his talk. I observed that Garrick, who was about to quit the stage, would soon have an easier life. "I think he should play once a year for the benefit of decayed actors." JOHNSON. "Alas, Sir! he will soon be a decayed actor himself."

We put up at the Angel inn, and passed the evening by ourselves in easy and familiar conversation. Talking of constitutional melancholy, he observed, "A man so afflicted, Sir, must divert distressing thoughts, and not combat with them." BOSWELL. "May not he think them down, Sir?" JOHNSON. "No, Sir. To attempt to *think them down* is madness. He should have a lamp constantly burning in his bed-chamber during the night, and if wakefully disturbed, take a book, and read, and compose himself to rest. To have the management of the mind is a great art, and it may be attained in a considerable degree by experience and habitual exercise." BOSWELL. "Should not he provide amusements for himself? for a course of chymistry?" JOHNSON. "Let him take a course of chymistry or a course of rope-dancing, or a course of any thing to which he is inclined at the time. Let him contrive to have as many retreats for his mind as he can, as many things to which it can fly from itself."

Dr. Wetherell and I talked of him without reserve in his own presence. WETHERELL. "I would have given him a hundred guineas if he would have written a preface to his 'Political Tracts,' by way of a Discourse on the British Constitution." I could perceive that he was displeased with this dialogue. He burst out, "Why should I be always writing?"

We then went to Pembroke College, and waited on his old friend, Dr. Adams, the master of it.

Johnson said, "When a man voluntarily engages in an impro-

tant controversy, he is to do all he can to lessen his antagonist, because authority from personal respect has much weight with most people, and often more than reasoning. If my antagonist writes bad language, though that may not be essential to the question, I will attack him for his bad language." ADAMS. "You will not jostle a chimney-sweeper." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, if it were necessary to jostle him *down*."

We walked with Dr. Adams into the master's garden, and into the common room. JOHNSON. (after a reverie of meditation,) "Ay! Here I used to play at draughts with Phil. Jones and Fludyer. Jones loved beer, and did not get very forward in the church. Fludyer turned out a scoundrel, a Whig, and said he was ashamed of having been bred at Oxford." BOSWELL. "Was he a scoundrel, Sir, in any other way than that of being a political scoundrel? Did he cheat at draughts?" JOHNSON. "Sir, we never played for *money*."

We talked of biography. — JOHNSON. "It is rarely well executed. They only who live with a man can write his life with any genuine exactness and discrimination; and few people who have lived with a man know what to remark about him."

I said, Mr. Robert Dodsley's life should be written, as he had been so much connected with the wits of his time.

JOHNSON. "Never believe extraordinary characters which you hear of people. Depend upon it, Sir, they are exaggerated. You do not see one man shoot a great deal higher than another." I mentioned Mr. Burke. JOHNSON. "Yes; Burke *is* an extraordinary man. His stream of mind is perpetual." Sir Joshua Reynolds informs me, that when Mr. Burke was first elected a member of Parliament, and Sir John Hawkins expressed a wonder at his attaining a seat, Johnson said, "Now we who know Mr. Burke, know that he will be one of the first men in the country." And once, when Johnson was ill, and unable to exert himself as much as usual without fatigue, Mr. Burke having been mentioned, he said, "That fellow calls forth all my powers. Were I to see Burke now it would kill me."

We rode through Blenheim park. I observed, "You and I, Sir, have, I think, seen together the extremes of what can be seen in Britain — the wild, rough island of Mull, and Blenheim park."

We dined at an excellent inn at Chapel-house, where he expatiated on the felicity of England in its taverns and inns, and triumphed over the French for not having, in any perfection, the tavern life. "There is no private house, (said he,) in which people can enjoy themselves so well, as at a capital tavern. Let there be ever so great plenty of good things, ever so much grandeur, ever so much elegance, ever so much desire that every body should be easy; in the nature of things it cannot be: there must always be some degree of care and anxiety. The master of the house is anxious to entertain his guests; the guests are anxious to be agreeable to him; and no man, but a very impudent dog indeed, can as freely command what is in another man's house, as if it were his own. Whereas, at a tavern, there is a general freedom from anxiety. You are sure you are welcome: and the more noise you make, the more trouble you give, the more good things you call for, the welcomer you are. No servants will attend you with the alacrity which waiters do, who are incited by the prospect of an immediate reward in proportion as they please. No, Sir; there is nothing which has yet been contrived by man, by which so much happiness is produced as by a good tavern or inn." He then repeated, with great emotion, Shenstone's lines: °

> "Whoe'er has travell'd life's dull round,
> Where'er his stages may have been,
> May sigh to think he still has found
> The warmest welcome at an inn."

In the afternoon, as we were driven rapidly along in the post-chaise, he said to me, "Life has not many things better than this."

We stopped at Stratford-upon-Avon, and drank tea and coffee; and it pleased me to be with him upon the classick ground of Shakspeare's native place.

He spoke slightingly of Dyer's "Fleece." — "The subject, Sir, cannot be made poetical. How can a man write poetically of serges and druggets!" Having talked of Grainger's "Sugar-Cane," I mentioned to him Mr. Langton's having told me, that this poem, when read in manuscript at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, had made all the assembled wits burst into a laugh, when, after much blank verse pomp, the poet began a new paragraph thus:

"Now, Muse, let's sing of *rats*."

And what increased the ridicule was, that one of the company, who slyly overlooked the reader, perceived that the word had been originally *mice*, and had been altered to *rats*, as more dignified.

"The Sugar-Cane, a Poem," did not please him. "What could he make of a sugar-cane? One might as well write the 'Parsley-bed, a Poem;' or 'The Cabbage-garden, a Poem.'" BOSWELL. "You must then *pickle* your cabbage with the *sal atticum*." JOHNSON. "You know there is already 'The Hop-Garden, a Poem:' and, I think, one could say a great deal about cabbage. The poem might begin with the advantages of civilized society over a rude state, exemplified by the Scotch, who had no cabbages till Oliver Cromwell's soldiers introduced them; and one might thus shew how arts are propagated by conquest, as they were by the Roman arms." He seemed to be much diverted with the fertility of his own fancy.

I told him, that I heard Dr. Percy was writing the history of the wolf in Great-Britain. JOHNSON. "The wolf, Sir! why the wolf? Why does he not write of the bear, which we had formerly? Nay, it is said we had the beaver. Or why does he not write of the grey rat, the Hanover rat, as it is called, because it is said to have come into this country about the time that the family of Hanover came? I should like to see '*The History of the Grey Rat, by Thomas Percy, D.D., Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.*'"

At Birmingham, after breakfast, we went to call on his old schoolfellow Mr. Hector. A very stupid maid, who opened

the door, told us, that, "her master was gone out; he was gone to the country; she could not tell when he would return." "My name is Johnson; tell him I called. Will you remember the name?" She answered with rustick simplicity, in the Warwickshire pronunciation, "I don't understand you, Sir." -- "Blockhead," (said he,) and roared loud in her ear, "*Johnson*," and then she catched the sound.

In a little while we met *Friend Hector*, as Mr. Lloyd called him. It gave me pleasure to observe the joy which Johnson and he expressed on seeing each other again. We all met at dinner at Mr. Lloyd's, where we were entertained with great hospitality. Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd had been married the same year with their Majesties, and like them, had been blessed with a numerous family of fine children, their numbers being exactly the same. Johnson said, "Marriage is the best state for a man in general; and every man is a worse man, in proportion as he is unfit for the married state."

Dr. Johnson said that he liked individuals among the Quakers, but not the sect. Dr. Johnson said to me, "You will see, Sir, at Mr. Hector's, his sister, Mrs. Careless, a clergyman's widow. She was the first woman with whom I was in love. It dropt out of my head imperceptibly; but she and I shall always have a kindness for each other." He laughed at the notion that a man can never be really in love but once, and considered it as a mere romantick fancy. Mr. Hector took me to his house, where we found Johnson sitting placidly at tea, with his *first love*.

Johnson lamented to Mr. Hector the state of one of their schoolfellows, Mr. Charles Congreve: "He obtained, I believe, considerable preferment in Ireland, but now lives in London, quite as a valetudinarian, afraid to go into any house but his own. He takes a short airing in his post-chaise every day. An elderly woman, whom he calls cousin, lives with him, and jogs his elbow, when his glass has stood too long empty, and encourages him in drinking, in which he is very willing to be encouraged; not that he gets drunk, for he is a very pious man; but he is always muddy. He confesses to

one bottle of port every day, and he probably drinks more. He is quite unsocial; his conversation is quite monosyllabical; and when, at my last visit, I asked him what o'clock it was, that signal of my departure had so pleasing an effect on him, that he sprung up to look at his watch, like a greyhound bounding at a hare." When Johnson took leave of Mr. Hector, he said, "Don't grow like Congreve; nor let me grow like him, when you are near me."

When he again talked of Mrs. Careless to-night, he seemed to have had his affection revived. "If I had married her, it might have been as happy for me." BOSWELL. "Pray, Sir, do you not suppose that there are fifty women in the world, with any one of whom a man may be as happy, as with any one woman in particular?" JOHNSON. "Ay, Sir, fifty thousand. I believe marriages would in general be as happy, and often more so, if they were all made by the Lord Chancellor, upon a due consideration of the characters and circumstances, without the parties having any choice in the matter."

When we came within the focus of the Lichfield lamps, "Now (said he,) we are getting out of a state of death." We put up at the Three Crowns, not one of the great inns, but a good old-fashioned one, the very next house to that in which Johnson was born and brought up, and which was still his own property. We had a comfortable supper, and got into high spirits. I felt all my Toryism glow in this old capital of Staffordshire. I could have offered incense *genio loci;* and I indulged in libations of that ale which Boniface, in "The Beaux Stratagem," recommends with such an eloquent jollity.

Next morning he introduced me to Mrs. Lucy Porter, his stepdaughter. She was now an old maid, with much simplicity of manner. She had never been in London. Her brother, a Captain in the navy, had left her a fortune of ten thousand pounds; about a third of which she had laid out in building a stately house, and making a handsome garden, in an elevated situation in Lichfield. Johnson, when here by

himself, used to live at her house. She reverenced him, and he had a parental tenderness for her.

We then visited Mr. Peter Garrick. "Sir, (said he,) I don't know but if Peter had cultivated all the arts of gaiety as much as David has done, he might have been as brisk and lively. Depend upon it, Sir, vivacity is much an art, and depends greatly on habit." A heavy German baron, who had lived much with the young English at Geneva, ambitious to be as lively as they, with assiduous exertion, was jumping over the tables and chairs in his lodgings; and when the people of the house ran in and asked, with surprize, what was the matter, he answered, "*Sh' apprens t'etre fif.*"

I saw here, for the first time, *oat ale;* and oat cakes, not hard as in Scotland, but soft like a Yorkshire cake, were served at breakfast. It was pleasant to me to find, that "*Oats,*" the "*food of horses,*" were so much used as the *food of the people* in Dr. Johnson's own town. He expatiated in praise of Lichfield and its inhabitants, who, he said, were "the most sober, decent people in England, the genteelest in proportion to their wealth, and spoke the purest English." I doubted as to the last article of this eulogy: for they had several provincial sounds; as *there,* pronounced like *fear,* instead of like *fair; once,* pronounced *woonse,*° instead of *wunse* or *wonse.* Johnson himself never got entirely free of those provincial accents. Garrick sometimes used to take him off, squeezing a lemon into a punch-bowl, with uncouth gesticulations, looking round the company, and calling out, "Who's for *poonsh?*"

Very little business appeared to be going forward in Lichfield. "Surely, Sir, (said I,) you are an idle set of people." "Sir, (said Johnson,) we are a city of philosophers, we work with our heads, and make the boobies of Birmingham work for us with their hands."

There was at this time a company of players performing at Lichfield. The manager begged leave to wait on Dr. Johnson.

When we were by ourselves he told me, "Forty years ago, Sir, I was in love with an actress here, Mrs. Emmet, who acted Flora, in 'Hob in the Well.'" If we may believe Mr. Garrick, his old master's taste in theatrical merit was by no means refined; he was not an *elegans formarum spectator*. Johnson said of an actor, who played Sir Harry Wildair at Lichfield, "There is a courtly vivacity about the fellow;" when, according to Garrick's account, "he was the most vulgar ruffian that ever went upon *boards*."

We had promised Mr. Stanton to be at his theatre on Monday. Dr. Johnson jocularly proposed to me to write a Prologue for the occasion: "A Prologue, by James Boswell, Esq. from the Hebrides." I was really inclined to take the hint. Methought, "Prologue, spoken before Dr. Samuel Johnson, at Lichfield, 1776;" would have sounded as well as, "Prologue, spoken before the Duke of York at Oxford," in Charles the Second's time. Much might have been said of what Lichfield had done for Shakspeare, by producing Johnson and Garrick. But I found he was averse to it.

We viewed the museum of Mr. Richard Green, apothecary here, who told me he was proud of being a relation of Dr. Johnson's. Johnson once said, "Sir, I should as soon have thought of building a man of war, as of collecting such a museum."

We drank tea and coffee at Mr. Peter Garrick's, where was Mrs. Aston, one of the maiden sisters of Mrs. Walmsley, wife of Johnson's first friend, and sister also of the lady of whom Johnson used to speak with the warmest admiration, by the name of Molly Aston.

Dr. Johnson went with me to the cathedral. It was grand and pleasing to contemplate this illustrious writer, now full of fame, worshipping in "the solemn temple" of his native city.

I returned to tea and coffee at Mr. Peter Garrick's, and then found Dr. Johnson at the Reverend Mr. Seward's, Canon Residentiary, who inhabited the Bishop's palace, in which Mr. Walmsley lived, and which had been the scene of many

happy hours in Johnson's early life. I had the pleasure of seeing his celebrated daughter, Miss Anna Seward,° to whom I have since been indebted for some obliging communications concerning Johnson.

While we sat at breakfast, Dr. Johnson received a letter by the post, which seemed to agitate him very much. When he had read it, he exclaimed, "One of the most dreadful things that has happened in my time!" The phrase *my time*, like the word *age*, is usually understood to refer to an event of a publick or general nature. I imagined something like an assassination of the King — like a gunpowder plot carried into execution — or like another fire of London. When asked, "What is it, Sir?" he answered, "Mr. Thrale has lost his only son! This is a total extinction to their family, as much as if they were sold into captivity." I saw male succession strong in his mind, even where there was no name, no family of any long standing. I said, it was lucky he was not present when this misfortune happened. JOHNSON. "It is lucky for *me*. People in distress never think that you feel enough." BOSWELL. "I own, Sir, I have not so much feeling for the distress of others, as some people have, or pretend to have; but I know this, that I would do all in my power to relieve them." JOHNSON. "Sir, it is affectation to pretend to feel the distress of others, as much as they do themselves. It is equally so, as if one should pretend to feel as much pain while a friend's leg is cutting off, as he does. No, Sir; you have expressed the rational and just nature of sympathy. I would have gone to the extremity of the earth to have preserved this boy."

Mrs. Aston, whom I had seen the preceding night, and her sister, Mrs. Gastrel, a widow lady, had each a house and garden, and pleasure ground, prettily situated upon Stowhill, a gentle eminence adjoining to Lichfield. Johnson walked away to dinner there, leaving me by myself without any apology. But I was soon convinced that my friend had conducted the matter with perfect propriety, for I received the following note in his handwriting: "Mrs. Gastrel, at the lower house on Stowhill, desires Mr. Boswell's company to

dinner at two." Mrs. Gastrel's husband was the clergyman who, while he lived at Stratford-upon-Avon, where he was proprietor of Shakspeare's garden, with Gothick barbarity cut down his mulberry tree, and, as Dr. Johnson told me, did it to vex his neighbours. His lady, I have reason to believe, on the same authority, participated in the guilt of what the enthusiasts of our immortal bard deem almost a species of sacrilege.

After dinner Dr. Johnson wrote a letter to Mrs. Thrale, on the death of her son. I said it would be very distressing to Thrale, but she would soon forget it, as she had so many things to think of. JOHNSON. "No, Sir, Thrale will forget it first. *She* has many things that she *may* think of. *He* has many things that he *must* think of."

He observed of Lord Bute, "It was said of Augustus, that it would have been better for Rome that he had never been born, or had never died. So it would have been better for this nation if Lord Bute had never been minister, or had never resigned."

In the evening we went to the Town-hall, which was converted into a temporary theatre, and saw "Theodosius," with "The Stratford Jubilee." I was happy to see Dr. Johnson sitting in a conspicuous part of the pit, and receiving affectionate homage from all his acquaintance. We were quite gay and merry. I afterwards mentioned to him that I condemned myself for being so, when poor Mr. and Mrs. Thrale were in such distress. JOHNSON. "You are wrong, Sir; twenty years hence Mr. and Mrs. Thrale will not suffer much pain from the death of their son."

"Marriage, Sir, is much more necessary to a man than to a woman: for he is much less able to supply himself with domestick comforts. I often wonder why young women should marry, as they have so much more freedom, and so much more attention paid to them while unmarried, than when married."

"Never speak of a man in his own presence. It is always indelicate, and may be offensive."

"Questioning is not the mode of conversation among gentlemen. It is assuming a superiority, and it is particularly wrong to question a man concerning himself. There may be parts of his former life which he may not wish to be made known to other persons, or even brought to his own recollection."

"A man should be careful never to tell tales of himself to his own disadvantage. People may be amused and laugh at the time, but they will be remembered and brought out against him upon some subsequent occasion."

Dr. Taylor's large, roomy post-chaise, drawn by four stout, plump horses, and driven by two steady jolly postilions, conveyed us to Ashbourne; where I found my friend's schoolfellow living upon an establishment perfectly corresponding with his substantial, creditable equipage: his house, garden, pleasure grounds, table, in short every thing good, and no scantiness appearing. Every man should form such a plan of living as he can execute completely. Let him not draw an outline wider than he can fill up. Dr. Taylor had a considerable political interest in the county of Derby, which he employed to support the Devonshire family; for, though the schoolfellow and friend of Johnson, he was a Whig. I could not perceive in his character much congeniality of any sort with that of Johnson, who, however, said to me, "Sir, he has a very strong understanding." His size, and figure, and countenance, and manner, were that of a hearty English 'Squire, with the parson superinduced: and I took particular notice of his upper-servant, Mr. Peters, a decent grave man, in purple clothes, and a large white wig, like the butler or *major domo* of a bishop.

JOHNSON. "There is nothing against which an old man should be so much upon his guard as putting himself to nurse." Dr. Taylor commended a physician. "I fight many battles for him, as many people in the country dislike him." JOHNSON. "But you should consider, Sir, that by every one of your victories he is a loser; for, every man of whom you get the better, will be very angry, and resolve not to employ him;

whereas if people get the better of you in argument about him, they'll think, 'We'll send for Dr. —— nevertheless.'" This was an observation deep and sure in human nature.

JOHNSON. "Fine clothes are good only as they supply the want of other means of procuring respect.° Was Charles the Twelfth, think you, less respected for his coarse blue coat and black stock? And you find the King of Prussia dresses plain, because the dignity of his character is sufficient." I heedlessly said, "Would not *you*, Sir, be the better for velvet embroidery?" JOHNSON. "Sir, you put an end to all argument when you introduce your opponent himself. Have you no better manners? There is *your want*."

He used the epithet scoundrel, very commonly, not quite in the sense in which it is generally understood, but as a strong term of disapprobation; as when he abruptly answered Mrs. Thrale, who had asked him how he did, "Ready to become a scoundrel, madam; with a little more spoiling you will, I think, make me a complete rascal;" — he meant, easy to become a capricious and self-indulgent valetudinarian; a character for which I have heard him express great disgust.

JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, a man is very apt to complain of the ingratitude of those who have risen far above him. A man when he gets into a higher sphere, into other habits of life, cannot keep up all his former connections. Then, Sir, those who knew him formerly upon a level with themselves, may think that they ought still to be treated as on a level."

He said, "It is commonly a weak man, who marries for love. A woman of fortune being used to the handling of money, spends it judiciously: but a woman who gets the command of money for the first time upon her marriage, has such a gust in spending it, that she throws it away with great profusion."

He praised the ladies of the present age, insisting that they were more faithful to their husbands, and more virtuous, than in former times, because their understandings were better cultivated.

I express an uneasy apprehension that my wife and chil-

dren might, perhaps, be ill. "Sir, (said he,) consider how foolish you would think it in *them* to be apprehensive that *you* are ill." This sudden turn relieved me for the moment; but I afterwards perceived it to be an ingenious fallacy.

We stopped at Messieurs Dillys, from whence he hurried away, in a hackney coach, to Mr. Thrale's in the Borough. I called at his house in the evening, having promised to acquaint Mrs. Williams of his safe return; when, to my surprize, I found him sitting with her at tea, and, as I thought, not in a very good humour: for, it seems, when he had got to Mr. Thrale's, he found the coach was at the door waiting to carry Mrs. and Miss Thrale, and Signor Baretti, their Italian master, to Bath. This was not showing the attention which might have been expected to the "Guide, Philosopher, and Friend"; the *Imlac* who had hastened from the country to console a distressed mother.

I shewed him his "Translation of Lobo's Account of Abyssinia." He seemed to think it beneath him, though done at six-and-twenty. I said, "Your style, Sir, is much improved since you translated this." He answered, with a sort of triumphant smile, "Sir, I hope it is."

I found him very busy putting his books in order, and as they were generally very old ones, clouds of dust were flying around him. He had on a pair of large gloves such as hedgers use. His present appearance put me in mind of my uncle, Dr. Boswell's description of him, "A robust genius, born to grapple with whole libraries."

I gave him an account of a conversation which had passed between me and Captain Cook. BOSWELL. "One is carried away with the general grand and indistinct notion of A VOYAGE ROUND THE WORLD." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, but a man is to guard himself against taking a thing in general." When a friend mentioned to him several extraordinary facts, as communicated to him by the circumnavigators, he slily observed, "Sir, I never before knew how much I was respected by these gentlemen; they told *me* none of these things."

He had been in company with Omai, a native of one of the

South Sea Islands: "Sir, he had passed his time, while in England, only in the best company; so that all that he had acquired of our manners was genteel. Lord Mulgrave and he dined one day at Streatham; they sat with their backs to the light fronting me; and there was so little of the savage in Omai, that I was afraid to speak to either, lest I should mistake one for the other."

BOSWELL. "I should think that where military men were numerous, they would be less valued as not being rare."

JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, wherever a particular character or profession is high in the estimation of a people, those who are of it will be valued above other men. We value an Englishman high in this country, and yet Englishmen are not rare in it."

Mr. Murray praised the ancient philosophers for the candour and good humour with which those of different sects disputed with each other. JOHNSON. "Sir, they disputed with good humour, because they were not in earnest as to religion. When a man has nothing to lose, he may be in good humour with his opponent. Accordingly you see in Lucian the Epicurean, who argues only negatively, keeps his temper; the Stoick, who has something positive to preserve, grows angry. Every man who attacks my belief diminishes in some degree my confidence in it, and therefore makes me uneasy, and I am angry with him who makes me uneasy." MURRAY. "But, Sir, truth will always bear an examination." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, but it is painful to be forced to defend it. Consider, Sir, how should you like, though conscious of your innocence, to be tried before a jury for a capital crime, once a week."

"A man, who has enough without teaching, will probably not teach; for we would all be idle if we could. I wish there were many places of a thousand a year at Oxford, to keep first-rate men of learning from quitting the University."

"Sir, it is of so much more consequence that truth should be told, than that individuals should not be made uneasy, that it is much better that the law does not restrain writing freely concerning the characters of the dead.

But if a man could say nothing against a character but what he can prove, history could not be written."

I said, it was a pity that truth was not so firm as to bid defiance to all attacks, so that it might be shot at as much as people chose to attempt, and yet remain unhurt. JOHNSON. "Then, Sir, it would not be shot at. Nobody attempts to dispute that two and two make four: but with contests concerning moral truth, human passions are generally mixed, and therefore it must ever be liable to assault and misrepresentation."

When I expressed an earnest wish for his remarks on Italy, he said, "I do not see that I could make a book upon Italy; yet I should be glad to get two hundred pounds, or five hundred pounds, by such a work. No man but a blockhead ever wrote except for money."

Johnson had seen great variety of characters; and none could observe them better, as was evident from the strong, yet nice portraits which he often drew. If he had made out what the French call *une catalogue raisonnée* of all the people who had passed under his observation it would have afforded a very rich fund of instruction and entertainment. "The most literary conversation I ever enjoyed, was at the table of Jack Ellis, a money-scrivener [c] behind the Royal Exchange." He could describe and discriminate them all with precision and vivacity. He associated with persons the most widely different in manners, abilities, rank and accomplishments. He was at once the companion of the brilliant Colonel Forrester of the Guards, who wrote "The Polite Philosopher," and of the awkward and uncouth Robert Levett; of Lord Thurlow, and Mr. Sastres, the Italian master; and has dined one day with the beautiful, gay, and fascinating Lady Craven, and the next with good Mrs. Gardiner, the tallow-chandler, on Snowhill.

A large package was brought to him from the post-office, said to have come from Lisbon, charged *seven pounds, ten shillings*. He would not receive it, supposing it to be some trick. But upon enquiry afterwards he found that it was

from a friend in the East Indies of whom he had been speaking.

JOHNSON. "*Who* is ruined by gaming? You will not find six instances in an age. There is a strange rout made about deep play: whereas you have many more people ruined by adventurous trade, and yet we do not hear such an outcry against it. At Oxford (he said,) he wished he had learned to play at cards." The truth, however, is, that he loved to display his ingenuity in argument; and would maintain opinions which he was sensible were wrong, but in supporting which, his reasoning and wit would be most conspicuous. He would begin thus: "Why, Sir, as to the good or evil of card-playing —" "Now, (said Garrick,) he is thinking which side he shall take." He appeared to have a pleasure in contradiction, especially when any opinion whatever was delivered with an air of confidence.

We sat together till it was too late for the afternoon service. Thrale said he had come with intention to go to church with us. We went to evening prayers at St. Clement's church, after having drank coffee; an indulgence, which I understood Johnson yielded to on this occasion, in compliment to Thrale.

On Easter-day, after having been at St. Paul's cathedral, I came to Dr. Johnson, according to my usual custom. It seemed to me that there was always something peculiarly mild and placid in his manner upon this holy festival.

A lady of my acquaintance maintained, that her husband's having been guilty of numberless infidelities, released her from conjugal obligations. JOHNSON. "This is miserable stuff, Sir. To the contract of marriage, besides the man and wife, there is a third party — Society; and if it be considered as a vow — God: and, therefore, it cannot be dissolved by their consent alone. Laws are not made for particular cases, but for men in general."

Mr. Macbean mentioned that he had been forty years absent from Scotland. "Ah, Boswell! (said Johnson, smiling,) what would you give to be forty years from Scotland?"

"The law against usury is for the protection of creditors as

well as debtors; for if there were no such check, people would be apt, from the temptation of great interest, to lend to desperate persons, by whom they would lose their money."

Mrs. Williams was very peevish; and I wondered at Johnson's patience. His humane consideration of the forlorn and indigent state in which this lady was left by her father, induced him to treat her with the utmost tenderness, and even to be desirous of procuring her amusement, so as sometimes to incommode many of his friends, by carrying her with him to their houses, where, from her manner of eating, in consequence of her blindness, she could not but offend the delicacy of persons of nice sensations.

JOHNSON. "It is better that some should be unhappy, than that none should be happy, which would be the case in a general state of equality."

"With some people, gloomy penitence is only madness turned upside down."

It was now resolved that the proposed journey to Italy should not take place this year. He said, "I am disappointed, to be sure; but it is not a great disappointment. I shall probably contrive to get to Italy some other way. But I won't mention it to Mr. and Mrs. Thrale, as it might vex them." I suggested, that going to Italy might have done Mr. and Mrs. Thrale good. JOHNSON. "I rather believe not, Sir. While grief is fresh, every attempt to divert only irritates. You must wait till grief be *digested*, and then amusement will dissipate the remains of it."

JOHNSON. "We may be excused for not caring much about other people's children. It may be observed, that men, who from being engaged in business, seldom *see* their children, do not care much about them. I myself should not have had much fondness for a child of my own." MRS. THRALE. "Nay, Sir, how can you talk so?" JOHNSON. "At least, I never wished to have a child."

I like to recollect all the passages that I heard Johnson repeat: it stamps a value on them.

"Akenside was a superiour poet both to Gray and Mason."

Talking of the Reviews,° Johnson said, "I think them very impartial: I do not know an instance of partiality." He expatiated a little more on them this evening. "The Monthly Reviewers (said he,) are not Deists; but they are for pulling down all establishments. The Critical Reviewers are for supporting the constitution both in Church and state. The Critical Reviewers, I believe, often review without reading the books through; but lay hold of a topick, and write chiefly from their own minds. The Monthly Reviewers are duller men, and are glad to read the books through."

Talking of "The Spectator," he said, "It is wonderful that there is such a proportion of bad papers, in the half of the work which was not written by Addison; for there was all the world to write that half, yet not a half of that half is good. One of the finest pieces in the English language is the paper on Novelty, yet we do not hear it talked of. It was written by Grove, a dissenting *teacher*." He would not, I perceived, call him a *clergyman*. Mr. Murphy said, he remembered when there were several people alive in London who enjoyed a considerable reputation merely from having written a paper in "The Spectator." He mentioned particularly Mr. Ince, who used to frequent Tom's coffee-house. "But (said Johnson,) you must consider how highly Steele speaks of Mr. Ince."

Dr. Barry's notion was, that pulsation occasions death by attrition; and that, therefore, the way to preserve life is to retard pulsation. Soon after this, Dr. Johnson said something very flattering to Mrs. Thrale, wishing her long life. "Sir, (said I,) if Dr. Barry's system be true, you have now shortened Mrs. Thrale's life, perhaps, some minutes, by accelerating her pulsation."

I dined with him at General Paoli's. Garrick talked of Abel Drugger° as *a small part;* and related, with pleasant vanity, that a Frenchman, who had seen him in one of his low characters, exclaimed, "*Comment! je ne le crois pas. Ce n'est pas Monsieur Garrick, ce Grand Homme!*" Garrick added, with an appearance of grave recollection, "If

I were to begin life again, I think I should not play those low characters." I observed, "Sir, your great excellence is your representing so well characters so very different." JOHNSON. "Garrick, Sir, was not in earnest in what he said; for, to be sure, his peculiar excellence is his variety; and, perhaps, there is not any one character which has not been as well acted by somebody else as he could do it." BOSWELL. "Why then, Sir, did he talk so?" JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, to make you answer as you did." BOSWELL. "I don't know, Sir, he seemed to dip deep into his mind for the reflection." JOHNSON. "He had not far to dip, Sir; he had said the same thing, probably, twenty times before."

A journey to Italy° was still in his thoughts. He said, "A man who has not been in Italy, is always conscious of an inferiority. The grand object of travelling is to see the shores of the Mediterranean. On those shores were the four great Empires of the world; the Assyrian, the Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman. — All our religion, almost all our law, almost all our arts, almost all that sets us above savages, has come to us from the shores of the Mediterranean." The General observed, that "THE MEDITERRANEAN would be a noble subject for a poem."

We talked of translation. JOHNSON. "You may translate books of science exactly. You may also translate history, in so far as it is not embellished with oratory, which is poetical. Poetry, indeed, cannot be translated; and, therefore, it is the poets that preserve languages. As the beauties of poetry cannot be preserved in any language except that in which it was originally written, we learn the language."

JOHNSON. "Sir, while knowledge is a distinction, those who are possessed of it will naturally rise above those who are not."

"Goldsmith (he said,) referred every thing to vanity; his virtues, and his vices too, were from that motive. He was not a social man. He never exchanged mind with you."

"Thomson had a true poetical genius, the power of viewing every thing in a poetical light. His fault is such a cloud of words

sometimes, that the sense can hardly peep through. Shiels was one day sitting with me. I took down Thomson, and read aloud a large portion of him, and then asked, — 'Is not this fine?' Shiels having expressed the highest admiration, 'Well, Sir, (said I,) I have omitted every other line.'"

Boswell. "Does not Gray's poetry, Sir, tower above the common mark?" Johnson. "Yes, Sir: but we must attend to the difference between what men in general cannot do if they would, and what every man may do if he would. Sixteen-string Jack° towered above the common mark." Boswell. "Then, Sir, what is poetry?" Johnson. "Why, Sir, it is much easier to say what it is not. We all *know* what light is: but it is not easy to *tell* what it is."

I introduced Aristotle's doctrine in his "Art of Poetry," of "the κάθαρσις τῶν παθημάτων, the purging of the passions," as the purpose of tragedy. "But how are the passions to be purged by terrour and pity?" (said I, with an assumed air of ignorance, to incite him to talk.) Johnson. "Why, Sir, the passions are the great movers of human actions; but they are mixed with such impurities, that it is necessary they should be purged or refined by means of terrour and pity. For instance, ambition is a noble passion; but by seeing upon the stage that a man who is so excessively ambitious as to raise himself by injustice is punished, we are terrified at the fatal consequences of such a passion." Johnson's expression was so forcible and brilliant, that Mr. Cradock whispered me, "O that his words were written in a book!"

I observed the great defect of the tragedy of "Othello" was, that it had not a moral; for that no man could resist the circumstances of suspicion which were artfully suggested to Othello's mind. Johnson. "In the first place, Sir, we learn from 'Othello' this very useful moral, not to make an unequal match; in the second place, we learn not to yield, too readily, to suspicion. The handkerchief is merely a trick, though a very pretty trick. No, Sir, I think 'Othello' has more moral than almost any play."

Talking of a penurious gentleman Johnson said, "Sir, he

is narrow, not so much from avarice, as from impotence to spend his money. He cannot find in his heart to pour out a bottle of wine; but he would not much care if it should sour."

Mr. Murphy paid him the highest compliment ever paid to a layman, by asking his pardon for repeating some oaths in the course of telling a story.

Johnson and I supped this evening at the Crown and Anchor tavern, in company with Sir Joshua Reynolds.

We discussed the question, whether drinking improved conversation and benevolence. Sir Joshua maintained it did. "I am sure that moderate drinking makes people talk better." JOHNSON. "No, Sir; wine gives not light, gay, ideal hilarity; but tumultuous, noisy, clamorous merriment. I have heard none of those drunken, — nay, drunken is a coarse word, — none of those *vinous* flights." SIR JOSHUA. "Because you have sat by, quite sober, and felt an envy of the happiness of those who were drinking." JOHNSON. "Perhaps, contempt. — And, Sir, it is not necessary to be drunk one's self, to relish the wit of drunkenness. Do we not judge of the drunken wit of the dialogue between Iago and Cassio, the most excellent in its kind, when we are quite sober? Wit is wit, by whatever means it is produced; I admit that the spirits are raised by drinking, as by the common participation of any pleasure: cock-fighting, or bear-baiting, will raise the spirits of a company, as drinking does, though surely they will not improve conversation. I also admit, that there are some sluggish men who are improved by drinking; as there are fruits which are not good till they are rotten. There are such men, but they are medlars.° There is no position, however false in its universality, which is not true of some particular man." SIR WILLIAM FORBES said, "Might not a man warmed with wine be like a bottle of beer, which is made brisker by being set before the fire?" — "Nay, (said Johnson, laughing,) I cannot answer that: that is too much for me. Sir, I do not say it is wrong to produce self-complacency by drinking: I only deny that it improves the mind."

He said, that for general improvement, a man should read

whatever his immediate inclination prompts him to; though to be sure, if a man has a science to learn, he must regularly and resolutely advance. "What we read with inclination makes a much stronger impression. If we read without inclination, half the mind is employed in fixing the attention." He read Fielding's "Amelia" through, without stopping. "If a man begins to read in the middle of a book, and feels an inclination to go on, let him not quit it, to go to the beginning. He may perhaps not feel again the inclination."

I went to Bath; and on my arrival at the Pelican inn, found lying for me an obliging invitation from Mr. and Mrs. Thrale. They were gone to the rooms: but there was a kind note from Dr. Johnson, that he should sit at home all the evening. Before Mr. and Mrs. Thrale returned, we had by ourselves some hours of tea-drinking and talk.

JOHNSON. "They who allow their passions to confound the distinctions between right and wrong are criminal."

A certain female political writer, whose doctrines he disliked, had of late become very fond of dress. JOHNSON. "It is better she should be reddening her own cheeks, than blackening other people's characters."

He told us that "Addison wrote Budgell's papers in the Spectator, at least mended them so much, that he made them almost his own; and that Draper, Tonson's partner, assured Mrs. Johnson, that the much admired Epilogue to 'The Distressed Mother,' which came out in Budgell's name, was in reality written by Addison."

Of the father of one of our friends, he observed, "He never clarified his notions, by filtrating them through other minds. He had a canal upon his estate, where at one place the bank was too low. — 'I dug the canal deeper,' said he."

A literary lady of large fortune did good to many, evidently from vanity. JOHNSON. "I have seen no beings who do as much good from benevolence, as she does from whatever motive."

Even Mrs. Thrale did not escape his friendly animadversion. When he and I were one day endeavouring to ascertain, ar-

ticle by article, how one of our friends could possibly spend as much money in his family as he told us he did, she interrupted us by a lively extravagant sally on the expence of clothing his children, describing it in a very ludicrous and fanciful manner. Johnson looked a little angry, and said, "Nay, Madam, when you are declaiming, declaim; and when you are calculating, calculate." At another time, when she said, perhaps affectedly, "I don't like to fly." JOHNSON. "With *your* wings, Madam, you *must* fly: but have a care, there are *clippers* abroad."

A gentleman expressed a wish to go and live three years at Otaheité, or New Zealand, in order to be satisfied what pure nature can do for man. JOHNSON. "What could you learn, Sir? Of the past, or the invisible, they can tell nothing. What account of their religion can you suppose to be learnt from savages? Only consider, Sir, our own state: our religion is in a book; we have an order of men whose duty it is to teach it, we have one day in the week set apart for it. Yet ask the first ten gross men you meet, and hear what they can tell of their religion."

He and I made an excursion to Bristol, where I was entertained with seeing him enquire upon the spot, into the authenticity of "*Rowley's* Poetry," as I had seen him enquire upon the spot into the authenticity of "*Ossian's* Poetry." George Catcot, the pewterer, who was as zealous for Rowley, as Dr. Hugh Blair was for *Ossian*, with a triumphant air of lively simplicity called out, "I'll make Dr. Johnson a convert." Dr. Johnson, at his desire, read aloud some of Chatterton's fabricated verses, while Catcot stood at the back of his chair, moving himself like a pendulum, and beating time with his feet, and now and then looking into Dr. Johnson's face, wondering that he was not yet convinced. We saw some of the *originals* as they were called, which were executed very artificially. Honest Catcot seemed to pay no attention whatever to any objections, but insisted, as an end of all controversy, that we should go with him to the tower of the church of St. Mary, Redcliff, and *view with our own eyes* the

ancient chest in which the manuscripts were found. Dr. Johnson good-naturedly agreed; and though troubled with a shortness of breathing, laboured up a long flight of steps. "*There*, (said Catcot, with a bouncing confident credulity,) *there* is the very chest itself." After this *ocular demonstration*, there was no more to be said. Johnson said of Chatterton, "It is wonderful how the whelp has written such things."

We were by no means pleased with our inn at Bristol. Johnson was ready with his raillery. "Why, it was so bad, that Boswell wished to be in Scotland!"

JOHNSON. "Where there is no education, as in savage countries, men will have the upper hand of women. Bodily strength, no doubt, contributes to this; but it would be so, exclusive of that; for it is mind that always governs. When it comes to dry understanding, man has the better."

"There is much talk of the misery which we cause to the brute creation; but they are recompensed by existence."

BOSWELL. "But the question is, whether the animals who endure such sufferings of various kinds, for the service and entertainment of man, would accept of existence, upon the terms on which they have it. Madame de Sévigné complains of the task of existence having been imposed upon her without her consent."

JOHNSON. "That man is never happy for the present is so true, that all his relief from unhappiness is only forgetting himself for a little while. Life is a progress from want to want, not from enjoyment to enjoyment."

"Though many are nominally entrusted with the administration of hospitals and other publick institutions, almost all the good is done by one, by whom the rest are driven on; owing to confidence in him, and indolence in them."

"Lord Chesterfield's Letters to his son, I think, might be made a very pretty book. Take out the immorality, and it should be put in the hands of every young gentleman. An elegant manner and easiness of behaviour are acquired gradually and imperceptibly. No man can say, 'I'll be genteel.'

There are ten genteel women for one genteel man, because they are more restrained. A man without some degree of restraint is insufferable; but we are all less restrained than women. Were a woman sitting in company to put out her legs before her as most men do, we should be tempted to kick them in. Every man of any education would rather be called a rascal, than accused of deficiency in *the graces*." Mr. Gibbon° turned to a lady, and in his quaint manner, tapping his box, "Don't you think, Madam, (looking towards Johnson,) that among *all* your acquaintance you could find *one* exception?"

JOHNSON. "Mrs. Williams was angry that Thrale's family did not send regularly to her every time they heard from me while I was in the Hebrides. Little people are apt to be jealous: but they ought to consider, that superiour attention will necessarily be paid to superiour fortune or rank."

Of his notes on Shakspeare, he said, "I despise those who do not see that I am right in the passage 'asses of great charge.'° That on 'To be, or not to be,' is disputable."

"Many things false are transmitted from book to book, and gain credit in the world. One is the cry against luxury. A man gives half a guinea for a dish of green peas. How much gardening does this occasion? You will hear it said, very gravely, 'Why was not the half guinea, thus spent in luxury, given to the poor'? Alas! has it not gone to the *industrious* poor, whom it is better to support than the *idle* poor? You are much surer that you are doing good when you *pay* money to those who work, as the recompence of their labour, than when you *give* money merely in charity."

Johnson observed, "Oglethorpe, Sir, never *completes* what he has to say."

He made a similar remark on Lord Elibank: "Sir, there is nothing *conclusive* in his talk."

When I complained of having dined at a splendid table without hearing one sentence of conversation worthy of being remembered, he said, "Sir, there seldom is any such conversation." BOSWELL. "Why then meet at table?" JOHN-

son. "Why to eat and drink together, and to promote kindness; and, Sir, this is better done when there is no solid conversation: for when there is, people differ in opinion, and get into bad humour, or some of the company who are not capable of such conversation, are left out, and feel themselves uneasy."

Being irritated by hearing a gentleman ask Mr. Levett a variety of questions concerning him, when he was sitting by, he broke out, "Sir, you have but two topicks, yourself and me. I am sick of both."

I solicited his attention to a law case in which I was engaged. The "Liberty of the pulpit" was our great ground of defence. JOHNSON. "The right of censure and rebuke seems necessarily appendant to the pastoral office.° He, to whom the care of a congregation is entrusted, is considered as the shepherd of a flock, as the teacher of a school, as the father of a family. As a shepherd tending not his own sheep but those of his master, he is answerable for those that stray, and that lose themselves by straying. As a teacher giving instruction for wages, if those whom he undertakes to inform make no proficiency, he must have the power of enforcing attendance, of awakening negligence, and repressing contradiction. As a father, he possesses the paternal authority of admonition, rebuke, and punishment. If we enquire into the practice of the primitive church, we shall, I believe, find the ministers of the word exercising the whole authority of this complicated character. It therefore appears from ecclesiastical history, that the right of inflicting shame by public censure has been always considered as inherent in the Church. By the civil power it was never taken away. It is not improbable that from this acknowledged power of publick censure, grew in time the practice of auricular confession."

When I read this to Mr. Burke, he exclaimed, "Well; he does his work in a workman-like manner."

I conceived an irresistible wish to bring Dr. Johnson and Mr. Wilkes together. How to manage it, was a nice and difficult matter.

My worthy booksellers and friends, Messieurs Dilly in the Poultry, at whose hospitable and well-covered table I have seen a greater number of literary men, than at any other, except that of Sir Joshua Reynolds, had invited me to meet Mr. Wilkes and some more gentlemen. "Pray, (said I,) let us have Dr. Johnson." — "What, with Mr. Wilkes? not for the world, (said Mr. Edward Dilly;) Dr. Johnson would never forgive me." — "Come, (said I,) if you'll let me negotiate for you, I will be answerable that all shall go well."

Dr. Johnson was sometimes actuated by the spirit of contradiction, and by means of that I hoped I should gain my point. If I had come upon him with a direct proposal, "Sir, will you dine in company with Jack Wilkes?" he would have flown into a passion, and would probably have answered, "Dine with Jack Wilkes, Sir! I'd as soon dine with Jack Ketch." I therefore, while we were sitting quietly by ourselves at his house in an evening, took occasion to open my plan thus: — "Mr. Dilly, Sir, sends his respectful compliments to you, and would be happy if you would do him the honour to dine with him on Wednesday next along with me, as I must soon go to Scotland." JOHNSON. "Sir, I am obliged to Mr. Dilly. I will wait upon him —" BOSWELL. "Provided, Sir, I suppose, that the company which he is to have, is agreeable to you." JOHNSON. "What do you mean, Sir? What do you take me for? Do you think I am so ignorant of the world, as to imagine that I am to prescribe to a gentleman what company he is to have at his table?" BOSWELL. "I beg your pardon, Sir, for wishing to prevent you from meeting people whom you might not like. Perhaps he may have some of what he calls his patriotick friends with him." JOHNSON. "Well, Sir, and what then? What care *I* for his *patriotick friends?* Poh!" BOSWELL. "I should not be surprized to find Jack Wilkes there." JOHNSON. "And if Jack Wilkes *should* be there, what is that to *me*, Sir? My dear friend, let us have no more of this. I am sorry to be angry with you; but really it is treating me strangely to

talk to me as if I could not meet any company whatever, occasionally." Thus I secured him.

Upon the much expected Wednesday, I called on him about half an hour before dinner, as I often did when we were to dine out together, to see that he was ready in time, and to accompany him. I found him buffeting his books, covered with dust, and making no preparation for going abroad. "How is this, Sir? (said I). Don't you recollect that you are to dine at Mr. Dilly's?" JOHNSON. "Sir, I did not think of going to Dilly's: it went out of my head. I have ordered dinner at home with Mrs. Williams. You must talk to Mrs. Williams about this."

Here was a sad dilemma. If she should be obstinate, he would not stir. I hastened down stairs to the blind lady's room, and told her I was in great uneasiness, for Dr. Johnson had engaged to dine at Mr. Dilly's, but that he had told me he had forgotten his engagement, and had ordered dinner at home. "Yes, Sir, (said she, pretty peevishly,) Dr. Johnson is to dine at home." — "Madam, (said I,) his respect for you is such, that I know he will not leave you, unless you absolutely desire it. But as you have so much of his company, I hope you will be good enough to forego it for a day: as Mr. Dilly is a very worthy man, has frequently had agreeable parties at his house for Dr. Johnson, and will be vexed if the Doctor neglects him to-day. And then, Madam, be pleased to consider my situation; I carried the message, and I assured Mr. Dilly that Dr. Johnson was to come; and no doubt he has made a dinner, and invited a company, and boasted of the honour he expected to have. I shall be quite disgraced if the Doctor is not there." She gradually softened to my solicitations, and was graciously pleased to empower me to tell Dr. Johnson, "That all things considered, she thought he should certainly go." I flew back to him, still in dust, and "indifferent in his choice to go or stay;" but as soon as I had announced Mrs. Williams's consent, he roared, "Frank, a clean shirt," and was very soon drest. When I had him fairly seated in a hackney-coach with me, I exulted as much as a

fortune hunter who has got an heiress into a post-chaise with him to set out for Gretna-Green.

When we entered Mr. Dilly's drawing-room, he found himself in the midst of a company he did not know. I kept myself snug and silent, watching how he would conduct himself. I observed him whispering to Mr. Dilly, "Who is that gentleman, Sir?" — "Mr. Arthur Lee." — JOHNSON. "Too, too, too," (under his breath,) which was one of his habitual mutterings. Mr. Arthur Lee could not but be very obnoxious to Johnson, for he was not only a *patriot*, but an *American*. He was afterwards minister from the United States at the court of Madrid. "And who is the gentleman in lace?" — "Mr. Wilkes, Sir." This information confounded him still more: he had some difficulty to restrain himself, and taking up a book, sat down upon a window-seat and read, or at least kept his eye upon it intently for some time, till he composed himself. His feelings, I dare say, were awkward enough. But he no doubt recollected his having rated me for supposing that he could be at all disconcerted by any company, and he, therefore, resolutely set himself to behave quite as an easy man of the world, who could adapt himself at once to the disposition and manners of those whom he might chance to meet.

The cheering sound of "Dinner is upon the table," dissolved his reverie. Mr. Wilkes placed himself next to Dr. Johnson, and behaved to him with so much attention and politeness, that he gained upon him insensibly. No man eat° more heartily than Johnson, or loved better what was nice and delicate. Mr. Wilkes was very assiduous in helping him to some fine veal. "Pray give me leave, Sir; — It is better here — A little of the brown — Some fat, Sir — A little of the stuffing — Some gravy — Let me have the pleasure of giving you some butter — Allow me to recommend a squeeze of this orange; — or the lemon, perhaps, may have more zest." — "Sir, Sir, I am obliged to you, Sir." cried Johnson, bowing and turning his head to him with a look for some time of "surly virtue," but, in a short while, of complacency.

Foote being mentioned, Johnson said, "One species of wit he has in an eminent degree, that of escape. You drive him into a corner with both hands; but he's gone, Sir, when you think you have got him — like an animal that jumps over your head. Then he has a great range for wit; he never lets truth stand between him and a jest, and he is sometimes mighty coarse. Garrick is under many restraints from which Foote is free. The first time I was in company with Foote, I was resolved not to be pleased; and it is very difficult to please a man against his will. I went on eating my dinner pretty sullenly, affecting not to mind him. But the dog was so very comical, that I was obliged to lay down my knife and fork, throw myself back upon my chair, and fairly laugh it out. No, Sir, he was irresistible. He upon one occasion experienced, in an extraordinary degree, the efficacy of his powers of entertaining. Amongst the many and various modes which he tried of getting money, he became a partner with a small-beer brewer Fitzherbert took his small-beer; but it was so bad that the servants resolved not to drink it. They fixed upon a little black boy, to deliver their remonstrance. He was to inform Mr. Fitzherbert, in all their names, upon a certain day, that they would drink Foote's small-beer no longer. On that day Foote happened to dine at Fitzherbert's and this boy served at table; he was so delighted with Foote's stories, and merriment, and grimace, that when he went down stairs, he told them, 'This is the finest man I have ever seen. I will not deliver your message. I will drink his small-beer.'"

Somebody observed that Garrick could not have done this. WILKES. "Garrick would have made the small-beer still smaller. He is now leaving the stage; but he will play *Scrub* all his life." Johnson would let nobody attack Garrick but himself, so to bring out his commendation I said, loudly, "I have heard Garrick is liberal." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, I know that Garrick has given away more money than any man in England that I am acquainted with, and that not from ostentatious views."

Talking of the great difficulty of obtaining authentick infor-

mation for biography, Johnson told us, "When I was a young fellow I wanted to write the 'Life of Dryden,' and in order to get materials, I applied to the only two persons then alive who had seen him; these were old Swinney, and old Cibber. Swinney's information was no more than this, 'That at Will's coffee-house Dryden had a particular chair for himself, which was set by the fire in winter, and was then called his winter chair; and that it was carried out for him to the balcony in summer, and was then called his summer-chair.' Cibber could tell no more but 'That he remembered him a decent old man, arbiter of critical disputes at Will's.' Cibber had perhaps one leg only in the room, and durst not draw in the other."

Dr. Johnson and Mr. Wilkes talked of the contested passage in Horace's Art of Poetry, "*Difficile est propriè communia dicere.*" JOHNSON. "He means that it is difficult to appropriate to particular persons qualities which are common to all mankind, as Homer has done."

WILKES. "We have no City-Poet now. The last was Elkanah Settle. *Elkanah Settle* sounds so *queer*, who can expect much from that name? We should have no hesitation to give it for John Dryden, in preference to Elkanah Settle, from the names only."

Some Scotch had taken possession of a barren part of America. JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, all barrenness is comparative. The *Scotch* would not know it to be barren." BOSWELL. "Come, come, he is flattering the English. You have now been in Scotland, Sir, and say if you did not see meat and drink enough there." JOHNSON. "Why yes, Sir; meat and drink enough to give the inhabitants sufficient strength to run away from home." All these quick and lively sallies were said sportively, quite in jest, and with a smile, which showed that he meant only wit. Upon this topick he and Mr. Wilkes could perfectly assimilate; here was a bond of union between them. They amused themselves with persevering in the old jokes. I claimed a superiority for Scotland over England in one respect, that a seizure of the person, before

judgement is obtained, can take place only if his creditor should swear that he is about to fly from the country. WILKES. "That, I should think, may be safely sworn of all the Scotch nation." JOHNSON. (To Mr. Wilkes.) "You must know, Sir, I lately took my friend Boswell, and shewed him genuine civilized life in an English provincial town. I turned him loose at Lichfield, my native city, that he might see for once real civility: for you know he lives among savages in Scotland and among rakes in London." WILKES. "Except when he is with grave, sober, decent people, like you and me." JOHNSON. (Smiling) "And we ashamed of him."

They were quite frank and easy. Johnson told the story of his asking Mrs. Macaulay to allow her footman to sit down with them, to prove the ridiculousness of the arguments for the equality of mankind, and he said to me afterwards, with a nod of satisfaction, "You saw Mr. Wilkes acquiesced."

After dinner we had an accession of Mrs. Knowles, the Quaker lady, well known for her various talents, and of Mr. Alderman Lee. Amidst some patriotick groans, somebody said, "Poor old England is lost." JOHNSON. "Sir, it is not so much to be lamented that old England is lost, as that the Scotch have found it."

Mr. Burke gave me much credit for this successful *negotiation*; and pleasantly said, "that there was nothing equal to it in the whole history of the *Corps Diplomatique*."

I attended Dr. Johnson home, and had the satisfaction to hear him tell Mrs. Williams how much he had been pleased with Mr. Wilkes, and what an agreeable day he had passed.

I talked of the celebrated Margaret Caroline Rudd, whom I had visited, induced by the fame of her talents, address, and irresistible power of fascination. To a lady who disapproved of my visiting her, he said on a former occasion, "Nay, Madam, Boswell is in the right; I should have visited her myself, were it not that they have now a trick of putting every thing into the news-papers. I envy him his acquaintance with Mrs. Rudd."

I mentioned a scheme which I had of making a tour to the

Isle of Man, and giving a full account of it; and that Mr. Burke had playfully suggested as a motto,

"The proper study of mankind is MAN."

JOHNSON. "Sir, you will get more by the book than the jaunt will cost you; so you will have your diversion for nothing, and add to your reputation."

I thanked him with great warmth for all his kindness. "Sir, (said he,) you are very welcome. Nobody repays it with more."

How very false is the notion that has gone round the world of the rough and passionate and harsh manners of this great and good man. I admit that the beadle within him was often so eager to apply the lash, that the Judge had not time to consider the case with sufficient deliberation.

TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"I SEND you the poor dear Doctor's epitaph. Read it first yourself; and if you then think it right, show it to the Club. I am, you know, willing to be corrected. If you think any thing much amiss, keep it to yourself, till we come together. SAM. JOHNSON."

"OLIVARII GOLDSMITH,
Poetæ, Physici, Historici,
Qui nullum ferè scribendi genus
Non tetigit,
Nullum quod tetigit non ornavit:
Sive risus essent movendi,
Sive lacrymæ,
Affectuum potens at lenis dominator:
Ingenio sublimis, vividus, versatilis,
Oratione grandis, nitidus, venustus:
Hoc monumento memoriam coluit
Sodalium amor
Amicorum fides,
Lectorum veneratio.

Natus in Hiberniâ Forniæ Longfordiensis,
In loco cui nomen Pallas,
Nov. XXIX. MDCCXXXI;
Eblanæ literis institutus;
Obiit Londini,
April. IV, MDCCLXXIV."

Sir William Forbes writes to me thus: "I enclose the *Round Robin*. This *jeu d'esprit* took its rise one day at dinner at our friend Sir Joshua Reynolds's. The Epitaph became the subject of conversation, and various emendations were suggested. But the question was, who should have the courage to propose them to him? At last it was hinted, that there could be no way so good as that of a *Round Robin*, as the sailors call it, which they make use of when they enter into a conspiracy, so as not to let it be known who puts his name first or last to the paper. Mr. Burke then proposed the address as it stands in the paper in writing, to which I had the honour to officiate as clerk. Sir Joshua agreed to carry it to Dr. Johnson, who received it with much good humour, and desired Sir Joshua to tell the gentlemen, that he would alter the Epitaph in any manner they pleased, as to the sense of it; but *he would never consent to disgrace the walls of Westminster Abbey with an English inscription.*

DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. BOSWELL.

"MADAM,

"You will now have Mr. Boswell home; it is well that you have him; he has led a wild life. I have taken him to Lichfield, and he has followed Mr. Thrale to Bath. Pray take care of him, and tame him. The only thing in which I have the honour to agree with you is, in loving him: and while we are so much of mind in a matter of so much importance, our other quarrels will, I hope, produce no great bitterness. I am, Madam,

"Your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"May 16, 1776."

On Easter day we find the following emphatick prayer: "Almighty and most merciful Father, who seest all our miseries, and knowest all our necessities, look down upon me, and pity me. Defend me from the violent incursion of evil thoughts, and enable me to form and keep such resolutions as may conduce to the discharge of the duties which thy providence shall appoint me; and so help me, by thy Holy Spirit, that my heart may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found, and that I may serve thee with pure affection and a cheerful mind. Have mercy upon me, O God, have mercy upon me; years and infirmities oppress me, terrour and anxiety beset me. Have mercy upon me, my Creator and my Judge."

While he was at church, the agreeable impressions upon his mind are thus commemorated: "I was for some time distressed, but at last obtained, I hope from the God of Peace, more quiet than I have enjoyed for a long time. I had made no resolution, but as my heart grew lighter, my hopes revived, and my courage increased; and I wrote with my pencil in my Common Prayer Book,

"*Vita ordinanda.*°
Biblia legenda.
Theologiæ opera danda.
Serviendum et lætandum."

To Boswell.

"I have been much pleased with your late letter, and am glad that my old enemy, Mrs. Boswell, begins to feel some remorse. As to Miss Veronica's Scotch,° I think it cannot be helped. Her dialect will not be gross. Her mamma has not much Scotch, and you have yourself very little. I hope she knows my name, and does not call me *Johnston*.

"It is proposed to augment our club° from twenty to thirty, of which I am glad; for as we have several in it whom I do not much like to consort with, I am for reducing it to a mere miscellaneous collection of conspicuous men, without any determinate character. . . .

"Tell Mrs. Boswell that I shall taste her marmalade cautiously at first. *Timeo Danaos*° *et dona ferentes*. Beware, says the Italian proverb, of a reconciled enemy. She is, after all, a dear, dear lady.

"I am engaged to write little Lives, and little Prefaces, to a little edition of the English Poets. I think I have persuaded the booksellers to insert something of Thomson. SAM. JOHNSON."

He has a memorandum in this year, 1777 "29 May, Easter-Eve, I treated with booksellers on a bargain, but the time was not long." The bargain was concerning that undertaking; but his tender conscience seems alarmed, lest it should have intruded too much on his devout preparation for the solemnity of the ensuing day.

The Tragedy of "Sir Thomas Overbury," written by his early companion in London, Richard Savage, was brought out with alterations at Covent Garden. The Prologue to it was written by Mr. Richard Brinsley Sheridan. The concluding lines of this Prologue were these:

> "So pleads the tale that gives to future times
> The son's misfortunes and the parent's crimes;
> There shall his fame (if own'd to-night) survive,
> Fix'd by THE HAND THAT BIDS OUR LANGUAGE LIVE."

To Boswell.

"POOR DODD° was put to death yesterday, in opposition to the recommendation of the jury, — the petition of the city of London, — and a petition signed by three-and-twenty thousand hands. Surely the voice of the publick, when it calls so loudly, and calls only for mercy, ought to be heard.

"The saying that was given me in the papers I never spoke; but I wrote many of his petitions, and letters. He applied to me very often. He was, I am afraid, long flattered with hopes of life; but I had no part in the dreadful delusion.

"Your notion of the necessity of an yearly interview is very pleasing to both my vanity and tenderness. I shall,

perhaps, come to Carlisle another year: but my money has not held out so well as it used to do. I shall go to Ashbourne, and I purpose to make Dr. Taylor invite you.

"Mrs. Williams is in the country, to try if she can improve her health; she is very ill. Matters have come so about that she is in the country with very good accommodation; but age, and sickness, and pride, have made her so peevish that I was forced to bribe the maid to stay with her, by a secret stipulation of half a crown a week over wages.

"On Saturday I wrote a very short letter, immediately upon my arrival hither, to shew you that I am not less desirous of the interview than yourself. Life admits not of delays; when pleasure can be had, it is fit to catch it: Every hour takes away part of the things that please us, and perhaps part of our disposition to be pleased. If you and I live to be much older, we shall take great delight in talking over the Hebridean Journey.

"In the mean time it may not be amiss to contrive some other little adventure, but what it can be I know not; leave it, as Sidney says,

'To virtue, fortune, time, and woman's breast';

for I believe Mrs. Boswell must have some part in the consultation. SAM. JOHNSON."

There had been an earthquake. JOHNSON. "Sir, it will be much exaggerated in public talk: for, in the first place, the common people do not accurately adapt their thoughts to the objects; nor, secondly, do they accurately adapt their words to their thoughts: they do not mean to lie: but, taking no pains to be exact, they give you very false accounts. A great part of their language is proverbial. If any thing rocks at all, they say *it rocks like a cradle;* and in this way they go on."

JOHNSON. "All grief, for what cannot in the course of nature be helped, soon wears away: unless where there is madness. If, indeed, the cause of our grief is occasioned by our own misconduct, if grief is mingled with remorse of conscience,

it should be lasting." BOSWELL. "But, Sir, we do not approve of a man who very soon forgets the loss of a wife or a friend." JOHNSON. "Sir, we disapprove of him, not because he soon forgets his grief; for the sooner it is forgotten the better, but because we suppose, that if he forgets his wife or his friend soon, he has not had much affection for them."

He was to furnish a Preface and Life to any poet the booksellers pleased. I asked him if he would do this to any dunce's works, if they should ask him. JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, and *say* he was a dunce."

Johnson told me, that "Taylor was a very sensible, acute man, and had a strong mind: and yet such a sort of indolence, that if you should put a pebble upon his chimney-piece, you would find it there, in the same state, a year afterwards."

Dr. William Dodd, chaplain in ordinary to his Majesty: celebrated as a very popular preacher, an encourager of charitable institutions, having unhappily contracted expensive habits of living, he in an evil hour, when pressed by want of money, and dreading an exposure of his circumstances, forged a bond, flattering himself with hopes that he might be able to repay its amount without being detected. The person whose name he thus rashly and criminally presumed to falsify, was the Earl of Chesterfield, to whom he had been tutor, and who, he perhaps, in the warmth of his feelings, flattered himself would have generously paid the money, rather than suffer him to fall a victim to the dreadful consequences of violating the law against forgery. His noble pupil appeared against him, and he was capitally convicted. In his distress he bethought himself of Johnson's persuasive power of writing, if haply it might avail to obtain for him the Royal Mercy.

Johnson gave us this evening, in his happy discriminative manner, a portrait of the late Mr. Fitzherbert of Derbyshire. "There was (said he,) no sparkle, no brilliancy in Fitzherbert: but I never knew a man who was so generally acceptable. He made every body quite easy, overpowered nobody by the superiority of his talents, made no man think worse of himself for being his rival, seemed always to listen, did not oblige you

to hear much from him, and did not oppose what you said. A gentleman was making an affected rant, as many people do, of great feelings about 'his dear son,' who was at school near London; how anxious he was lest he might be ill, and what he would give to see him. 'Can't you (said Fitzherbert,) take a post-chaise and go to him?' This *finished* the affected man.

"Men hate more steadily than they love; and if I have said something to hurt a man once, I shall not get the better of this by saying many things to please him."

Taylor thus described his old school-fellow and friend, Johnson: "He is a man of a very clear head, great power of words, and a very gay imagination; but there is no disputing with him. He will not hear you, and having a louder voice than you, must roar you down."

I tried to get Dr. Johnson to like the Poems of Mr. Hamilton. He laughed at the rhyme, in Scotch pronunciation, *wishes* and *blushes*, reading *wishes*. When I urged that there were some good poetical passages in the book, "Where (said he,) will you find so large a collection without some?"

The Reverend Mr. Seward of Lichfield drank tea with us. Johnson described him thus:—"Sir, his ambition is to be a fine talker; so he goes to Buxton, and such places, where he may find companies to listen to him. And, Sir, he is a valetudinarian, one of those who are always mending themselves. I do not know a more disagreeable character than a valetudinarian, who thinks he may do any thing that is for his ease, and indulges himself in the grossest freedoms: Sir, he brings himself to the state of a hog in a stye."

Talking of biography, I said a man's peculiarities should be mentioned, because they mark his character. JOHNSON. "Sir, there is no doubt as to the peculiarities: the question is whether a man's vices should be mentioned; for instance, whether it should be mentioned that Addison and Parnell drank too freely; for people will probably more easily indulge in drinking from knowing this; so that more ill may be done by the example, than good by telling the whole truth." Here

was an instance of his varying from himself in talk; for when Lord Hailes and he sat one morning calmly conversing in my house at Edinburgh, I well remember that Dr. Johnson maintained, that "If a man is to write *A Panegyrick*, he may keep vices out of sight: but if he professes to write *A Life*, he must represent it really as it was;" and when I objected to the danger of telling that Parnell drank to excess, he said, that "it would produce an instructive caution to avoid drinking, when it was seen, that even the learning and genius of Parnell could be debased by it." And in the Hebrides he maintained, as appears from my "Journal," that a man's intimate friend should mention his faults, if he writes his life.

He had a violent argument with Dr. Taylor, as to the inclinations of the people of England at this time towards the Royal Family of Stuart. "If England were fairly polled, the present King would be sent away to-night, and his adherents hanged to-morrow." Taylor, who was as violent a Whig as Johnson was a Tory, was roused by this to a pitch of bellowing.

September 18. Last night Dr. Johnson had proposed that the crystal lustre, or chandelier, in Dr. Taylor's large room, should be lighted up some time or other. Taylor said, it should be lighted up next night. "Very well, (said I,) for it is Dr. Johnson's birth-day." When we were in the Isle of Sky, Johnson had desired me not to mention his birth-day. He did not seem pleased at this time that I mentioned it, and said (somewhat sternly,) "he would *not* have the lustre lighted the next day."

Some ladies, who had been present yesterday when I mentioned his birth-day, came to dinner to-day, and plagued him unintentionally, by wishing him joy.

"Thomas Warton puts," said he, "a very common thing in a strange dress till he does not know it himself, and thinks other people do not know it. For example; he'd write thus:

> 'Hermit hoar, in solemn cell,
> Wearing out life's evening gray.'

Gray evening is common enough; but *evening gray* he'd think fine. — Stay; — we'll make out the stanza:

> 'Hermit hoar, in solemn cell,
> Wearing out life's evening gray:
> Smite thy bosom, sage, and tell,
> What is bliss? and which the way?'"

BOSWELL. "But why smite his bosom, Sir?" JOHNSON. "Why to shew he was in earnest" (smiling). He at an after period added the following stanza:

> "Thus I spoke; and speaking sigh'd;
> — Scarce repress'd the starting tear; —
> When the smiling sage reply'd —
> — Come, my lad, and drink some beer."

Dr. Johnson and I set out in Dr. Taylor's chaise to go to Derby. The day was fine, and we resolved to go by Keddleston, the seat of Lord Scarsdale. I was struck with the magnificence of the building: and the extensive park. "One should think (said I,) that the proprietor of all this *must* be happy" — "Nay, Sir, (said Johnson,) all this excludes but one evil — poverty."

A well-drest elderly housekeeper shewed us the house. Dr. Johnson had lately attacked it violently, saying, "It would do excellently for a town-hall. The large room with the pillars (said he,) would do for the Judges to sit in at the assizes; the circular room for a jury-chamber; and the room above for prisoners." Dr. Taylor put him in mind of his *appearing* pleased with the house. "But (said he,) that was when Lord Scarsdale was present. Politeness obliges us to appear pleased with a man's works when he is present. No man will be so ill bred as to question you. You may therefore pay compliments without saying what is not true. I should say to Lord Scarsdale of his large room, 'My Lord, this is the most *costly* room that I ever saw:' which is true."

I was much struck with Daniel interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's dream, by Rembrandt. We were shown a pretty large library. In his Lordship's dressing-room lay Johnson's

small Dictionary: he shewed it to me, with some eagerness, saying, "Look'ye! *Quæ regio in terris nostri non plena laboris.*" He observed, also, Goldsmith's "Animated Nature;" and said, "Here's our friend! The poor Doctor would have been happy to hear of this."

In our way, Johnson strongly expressed his love of driving fast in a post-chaise. "If (said he,) I had no duties, and no reference to futurity, I would spend my life in driving briskly in a post-chaise with a pretty woman; but she should be one who could understand me, and would add something to the conversation." I observed, that we were this day to stop just where the Highland army did in 1745. JOHNSON. "It was a noble attempt." BOSWELL. "I wish we could have an authentick history of it." JOHNSON. "If you were not an idle dog you might write it, by collecting from every body what they can tell, and putting down your authorities."

At Derby, Dr. Butter accompanied us to see the manufactory of china there. The china was beautiful, but Dr. Johnson justly observed it was too dear; for that he could have vessels of silver, of the same size, as cheap as what were here made of porcelain.

Talking of shaving the other night at Dr. Taylor's, Dr. Johnson said, "Sir, of a thousand shavers, two do not shave so much alike as not to be distinguished." I thought this not possible, till he specified so many of the varieties in shaving: — holding the razor more or less perpendicular: — drawing long or short strokes; — beginning at the upper part of the face, or the under — at the right side or the left side.

JOHNSON, speaking of Dodd. "Depend upon it, Sir, when a man knows he is to be hanged in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully."

I ventured to mention a person who was as violent a Scotchman as he was an Englishman. He would say of Dr. Johnson, "Damned rascal! to talk as he does of the Scotch." This seemed, for a moment, "to give him pause."

He was much diverted with an article in the "Critical Review," giving an account of "A spiritual Diary and Soliloquy

quies, by John Rutty, M.D.," one of the people called Quakers. The following specimens were extracted by the Reviewers:

"Tenth month, 1753.

"23. Indulgence in bed an hour too long.

"Twelfth month, 17. An hypochondriack obnubilation from wind and indigestion.

"Ninth month, 28. An over-dose of whisky.

"29. A dull, cross, cholerick day.

"First month, 1757 — 22. A little swinish at dinner and repast.

"31. Dogged on provocation.

"Second month, 5. Very dogged or snappish.

"14. Snappish on fasting.

"26. Cursed snappishness to those under me, on a bodily indisposition.

"Third month, 14. On a provocation, exercised a dumb resentment for two days, instead of scolding.

"22. Scolding too vehemently.

"23. Dogged again.

"Fourth month, 29. Mechanically and sinfully dogged."

Johnson laughed heartily at this good Quietist's self-condemning minutes.

Dr. Hugh Blair had animadverted on the Johnsonian style as too pompous; and attempted to imitate it, by giving a sentence of Addison in "The Spectator," No. 411, in the manner of Johnson. "Their very first step out of business is into vice or folly;" Dr. Blair supposed would have been expressed in "The Rambler" thus: "Their very first step out of the regions of business is into the perturbation of vice, or the vacuity of folly." JOHNSON. "Sir, these are not the words I should have used. No, Sir; the imitators of my style have not hit it. Miss Aikin has done it the best; for she has imitated the sentiment as well as the diction."

In Baretti's "FRUSTA LETTERARIA," it is observed, that Dr. Robertson, the historian, had formed his style upon that of "*Il celebre Samuele Johnson.*" My friend himself was of that opinion. "Sir, if Robertson's style be faulty, he owes it

to me; that is, having too many words, and those too big ones."

Lord Monboddo had written to me some critical remarks upon the style of his "Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland." His Lordship praised the very fine passage upon landing at Icolmkill:° but disapproved of the richness of Johnson's language, and of his frequent use of metaphorical expressions. JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, this criticism would be just, if, in my style, superfluous words, or words too big for the thoughts, could be pointed out; but this I do not believe can be done."

JOHNSON. "Employment, Sir, and hardships, prevent melancholy. I suppose in all our army in America, there was not one man who went mad."

JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, I never knew any one who had such a *gust* for London as you have: and I cannot blame you for your wish to live there: yet, Sir, were I in your father's place, I should not consent to your settling there; for I have the old feudal notions, and I should be afraid that Auchinleck would be deserted, as you would soon find it more desirable to have a country-seat in a better climate. I own, however, that to consider it as a *duty* to reside on a family estate is a prejudice. The Laird of Auchinleck now is not near so great a man as the Laird of Auchinleck was a hundred years ago."

I told him, that one of my ancestors never went from home without being attended by thirty men on horseback. Johnson's shrewdness and spirit of enquiry was exerted upon every occasion. "Pray (said he,) how did your ancestor support his thirty men and thirty horses when he went at a distance from home, in an age when there was hardly any money in circulation?" I suggested the same difficulty to a friend who mentioned Douglas's going to the Holy Land with a numerous train of followers.

JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, you find no man, at all intellectual, who is willing to leave London. No, Sir, when a man is tired of London, he is tired of life; for there is in London all that life can afford."

He said, a country gentleman should bring his lady to visit London as soon as he can, that they may have agreeable topicks for conversation when they are by themselves.

I mentioned to him a saying which somebody had related of an American savage, who, when an European was expatiating on all the advantages of money, put this question: "Will it purchase *occupation?*" JOHNSON. "Depend upon it, Sir, this saying is too refined for a savage. And, Sir, money *will* purchase occupation; it will purchase all the conveniences of life: it will purchase variety of company; it will purchase all sorts of entertainment."

Johnson and Taylor were so different from each other, that I wondered at their preserving an intimacy. Their having been at school and college together, might, in some degree, account for this; but Sir Joshua Reynolds has furnished me with a stronger reason; for Johnson mentioned to him, that he had been told by Taylor he was to be his heir. He now, however, said to me, "Sir, I love him; but I do not love him more; my regard for him does not increase. As it is said in the Apocrypha, 'his talk is of bullocks.'° I do not suppose he is very fond of my company. His habits are by no means sufficiently clerical: this he knows that I see; and no man likes to live under the eye of perpetual disapprobation." I have no doubt that a good many sermons were composed for Taylor by Johnson. I found, upon his table, a part of one: and *Concio pro Tayloro* appears in one of his diaries.

JOHNSON. "Getting money is not all a man's business: to cultivate kindness is a valuable part of the business of life."

I found from experience, that to collect my friend's conversation so as to exhibit it with any degree of its original flavour, it was necessary to write it down without delay. To record his sayings, after some distance of time, was like preserving or pickling long-kept and faded fruits, or other vegetables, which, when in that state, have little or nothing of their taste when fresh.

JOHNSON. "Colley Cibber once consulted me as to one of his birth-day Odes, a long time before it was wanted. I ob-

jected very freely to several passages. Cibber lost patience and would not read his Ode to an end. When we had done with criticism, we walked over to Richardson's, the authour of 'Clarissa,' and I wondered to find Richardson displeased that I 'did not treat Cibber with more *respect*.' Now, Sir, to talk of *respect* for a *player!*" (smiling disdainfully). BOSWELL. "There, Sir, you are always heretical: you never will allow merit to a player." JOHNSON. "Merit, Sir, what merit? Do you respect a rope-dancer, or a ballad-singer? a fellow who claps a hump on his back, and a hump on his leg, and cries, '*I am Richard the Third*'? Nay, Sir, a ballad-singer is a higher man: there is both recitation and musick in his performance: the player only recites." BOSWELL. "*Who* can repeat Hamlet's soliloquy, 'To be, or not to be,' as Garrick does it?" JOHNSON. "Any body may. Jemmy, there (a boy about eight years old, who was in the room) will do it as well in a week." BOSWELL. "Garrick has got a hundred thousand pounds." JOHNSON. "Is getting a hundred thousand pounds a proof of excellence? That has been done by a scoundrel commissary." This was most fallacious reasoning. I was *sure*, for once, that I had the best side of the argument.

I unguardedly said, "I wish I saw you and Mrs. Macaulay together." He grew very angry; and, after a pause, while a cloud gathered on his brow, he burst out, "No, Sir; you would not see us quarrel, to make you sport. Don't you know that it is very uncivil to *pit* two people against one another?" Then, checking himself, and wishing to be more gentle, he added, "I do not say you should be hanged or drowned for this; but it *is* very uncivil. I would sooner keep company with a man from whom I must guard my pockets, than with a man who contrives to bring me into a dispute with somebody that he may hear it. Whatever the motive be, Sir, the man who does so, does very wrong. He has no more right to instruct himself at such risk, than he has to make two people fight a duel, that he may learn how to defend himself."

He found great fault with a gentleman for keeping a bad table. "Sir, (said he,) when a man is invited to dinner, he is disappointed if he does not get something good. I advised Mrs. Thrale, who has no card-parties at her house, to give sweet-meats, and such good things, in an evening, as are not commonly given, and she would find company enough come to her; for every body loves to have things which please the palate put in their way, without trouble or preparation."

Mr. Burke's "Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol, on the affairs of America," being mentioned, Johnson ridiculed the definition of a free government, *viz.* "For any practical purpose, it is what the people think so." — "I will let the King of France govern me on those conditions, (said he,) for it is to be governed just as I please." And when Dr. Taylor talked of a girl being sent to a parish workhouse, and asked how much she could be obliged to work, "Why, (said Johnson,) as much as is reasonable: and what is that? as much as *she thinks* reasonable."

He repeated his observation, that the differences among Christians are really of no consequence. I said, the great article of Christianity is the revelation of immortality. Johnson admitted it was.

A gentleman-farmer attempted to dispute with Johnson in favour of Mungo Campbell, who shot Alexander, Earl of Eglintoune, who he believed was about to seize his gun, as he had threatened to do. He said he should have done just as Campbell did. JOHNSON. "Whoever would do as Campbell did, deserves to be hanged." The gentleman-farmer said, "A poor man has as much honour as a rich man; and Campbell had *that* to defend." Johnson exclaimed, "A poor man has no honour." The English yeoman, not dismayed, proceeded: "Lord Eglintoune was a damned fool to run on upon Campbell, after being warned that Campbell would shoot him if he did." Johnson, who could not bear anything like swearing, angrily replied, "He was *not a damned* fool: he only thought too well of Campbell. He did not believe Campbell would be such a *damned* scoundrel, as to do so

damned a thing." His emphasis on *damned*, accompanied with frowning looks, reproved his opponent's want of decorum in *his* presence.

Of being mortified by rejection, when making approaches to the acquaintance of the great, he said, "I have always been more afraid of failing, than hopeful of success." And, indeed, no man ever less courted the favour of the great.

Taylor, "whose geese were all swans," as the proverb says, expatiated on the excellence of his bull-dog, which he told us, was "perfectly well shaped." Johnson, after examining the animal attentively, thus repressed the vain-glory of our host: — "No, Sir, he is *not* well shaped; for there is not the quick transition from the thickness of the fore-part, to the *tenuity* — the thin part — behind, — which a bull-dog ought to have." This *tenuity* was the only *hard word* that I heard him use during this interview, and it will be observed, he instantly put another expression in its place. Taylor said, a small bull-dog was as good as a large one. JOHNSON. "No, Sir; for, in proportion to his size, he has strength: and your argument would prove that a good bull-dog may be as small as a mouse."

One morning after breakfast, when the sun shone bright, we walked out together, and "pored" for some time with placid indolence upon an artificial water-fall, which Dr. Taylor had made by building a strong dyke of stone across the river behind the garden. It was now somewhat obstructed by branches of trees and other rubbish. Johnson, partly from a desire to see it play more freely, and partly from that inclination to activity which will animate, at times, the most inert and sluggish mortal, took a long pole which was lying on a bank, and pushed down several parcels of this wreck with painful assiduity, while I stood quietly by, wondering to behold the sage thus curiously employed. He worked till he was quite out of breath; and having found a large dead cat so heavy that he could not move it after several efforts, "Come," said he (throwing down the pole,) "*you* shall take it now." This may be laughed at as too trifling to record;

but it is a small characteristic trait in the Flemish picture which I give of my friend, and in which, therefore, I mark the most minute particulars. And let it be remembered, that "Æsop at play" is one of the instructive apologues of antiquity.

JOHNSON. "There must be a diseased mind, where there is a failure of memory at seventy. A man's head, Sir, must be morbid, if he fails so soon." My friend, being now himself sixty-eight, might think thus.

Wishing to be satisfied what truth there was in a story told me to his disadvantage, I mentioned it to him in direct terms: to this effect: that a gentleman who had lived in great intimacy with him, shewn him much kindness, and even relieved him from a spunging-house, having afterwards fallen into bad circumstances, was one day, when Johnson was at dinner with him, seized for debt, and carried to prison; that Johnson sat still undisturbed, and went on eating and drinking; upon which the gentleman's sister, who was present, could not suppress her indignation: "What, Sir, (said she,) are you so unfeeling, as not even to offer to go to my brother in his distress; you who have been so much obliged to him?" And that Johnson answered, "Madam, I owe him no obligation; what he did for me he would have done for a dog."

Johnson assured me, that the story was absolutely false: "Sir, I was very intimate with that gentleman, and was once relieved by him from an arrest; but I never was present when he was arrested, never knew that he was arrested, and I believe he never was in difficulties after the time when he relieved me. I loved him much; yet, in talking of his general character, I may have said, though I do not remember that I ever did say so; that as his generosity proceeded from no principle, but was a part of his profusion, he would do for a dog what he would do for a friend: but I never applied this remark to any particular instance, and certainly not to his kindness to me. Sir, I would have gone to the world's end to relieve him. The remark about the dog, if made by me, was such a sally as might escape one when painting a man highly."

He found fault with me for using the phrase to *make* money "Don't you see the impropriety of it? To *make* money is to *coin* it: you should say *get* money." The phrase, however, is, I think, pretty current. But Johnson was at all times jealous of infractions upon the genuine English language, and prompt to repress colloquial barbarisms; such as *pledging myself*, for *undertaking; line*, for *department*, or *branch*, as, the *civil line*, the *banking line*. He was particularly indignant against the almost universal use of the word *idea*, in the sense of *notion*, or *opinion*, when it is clear that *idea* can only signify something of which an image can be formed in the mind. We may have an *idea* or *image* of a mountain, a tree, a building; but we cannot surely have an *idea* or *image* of an *argument* or *proposition*. Yet we hear the first speakers in parliament "reprobating an *idea* unconstitutional, and fraught with the most dangerous consequences to a great and free country." Johnson called this "modern cant."

He pronounced the word *heard*, as if spelt with a double *e*, *heerd*. He said that if it were pronounced *herd*, there would be a single exception from the English pronunciation of the syllable *ear*.

In the evening our gentleman-farmer, and two others, entertained themselves and the company with a great number of tunes on the fiddle. Johnson desired to have "Let ambition fire thy mind," played over again, and appeared to give a patient attention to it; though he owned that he was very insensible to the power of musick. I told him that it affected me to such a degree, as often to agitate my nerves painfully, producing in my mind alternate sensations of pathetic dejection, so that I was ready to shed tears; and of daring resolution, so that I was inclined to rush into the thickest part of the battle. "Sir (said he,) I should never hear it, if it made me such a fool."

While some of the tunes of ordinary composition were played with no great skill, I was conscious of a generous attachment to Dr. Johnson, as my preceptor and friend, mixed with an affectionate regret that he was an old man, whom I

should probably lose in a short time. I thought I could defend him at the point of my sword. I said, "My dear Sir, we must meet every year, if you don't quarrel with me." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, you are more likely to quarrel with me, than I with you. My regard for you is greater almost than I have words to express; but I do not chuse to be always repeating it; write it down in the first leaf of your pocket-book, and never doubt of it again."

I talked to him of misery being "the doom of man," in this life, as displayed in his "Vanity of Human Wishes." Yet I observed that things were done upon the supposition of happiness; grand houses were built, fine gardens were made, splendid places of publick amusement were contrived, and crowded with company. JOHNSON. "Alas, Sir, these are all only struggles for happiness. When I first entered Ranelagh, it gave an expansion and gay sensation to my mind, such as I never experienced anywhere else. But, as Xerxes wept when he viewed his immense army, and considered that not one of that great multitude would be alive a hundred years afterwards, so it went to my heart to consider that there was not one in all that brilliant circle, that was not afraid to go home and think."

While Johnson and I stood in calm conference by ourselves in Dr. Taylor's garden, at a pretty late hour in a serene autumn night, looking up to the heavens, I directed the discourse to the subject of a future state. My friend was in a placid and most benignant frame of mind. "Sir, (said he,) I do not imagine that all things will be made clear to us immediately after death, but that the ways of Providence will be explained to us very gradually."

He had always been very zealous against slavery in every form. Upon one occasion, when in company with some very grave men at Oxford, his toast was, "Here's to the next insurrection of the negroes in the West Indies." His violent prejudice against our West Indian and American settlers appeared whenever there was an opportunity. Towards the conclusion of his "Taxation no Tyranny," he says, "How

is it that we hear the loudest *yelps* for liberty among the drivers of negroes?"

I said, that I was afraid I kept him too late up, "No, Sir, (said he,) I don't care though I sit all night with you." This was an animated speech from a man in his sixty-ninth year.

Had I been as attentive not to displease him as I ought to have been, I know not but this vigil might have been fulfilled; but I unluckily entered upon the controversy concerning the right of Great Britain to tax America, and attempted to argue in favour of our fellow-subjects on the other side of the Atlantick. I insisted that America might be very well governed, and made to yield sufficient revenue by the means of *influence*, as exemplified in Ireland, while the people might be pleased with the imagination of their participating of the British constitution, by having a body of representatives, without whose consent money could not be exacted from them. Johnson could not bear my thus opposing his avowed opinion, which he had exerted himself with an extreme degree of heat to enforce; and the violent agitation into which he was thrown, while reprimanding me, alarmed me so, that I heartily repented of my having unthinkingly introduced the subject.

We were fatigued by the contest; and he was not then in the humour to slide into easy and cheerful talk. We were after an hour or two very willing to separate and go to bed.

I went into Dr. Johnson's room before he got up, and finding that the storm of the preceding night was quite laid, I sat down upon his bed-side, and he talked with as much readiness and good humour as ever.

I spoke with gratitude of Dr. Taylor's hospitality. One evening, when I was sitting with him, Frank delivered this message: "Sir, Dr. Taylor sends his compliments to you, and begs you will dine with him to-morrow. He has got a hare." — "My compliments (said Johnson,) and I'll dine with him — hare or rabbit."

Edenser-inn, close by Chatsworth, was then kept by a very

jolly landlord. He happened to mention that "the celebrated Dr. Johnson had been in his house." I enquired *who* this Dr. Johnson was, that I might hear my host's notion of him. "Sir, (said he,) Johnson, the great writer; *Oddity*, as they call him. He's the greatest writer in England; he writes for the ministry; he has a correspondence abroad, and lets them know what's going on."

To Boswell.

"You always seem to call for tenderness. Know then, that in the first month of the present year I very highly esteem and very cordially love you. I hope to tell you this at the beginning of every year as long as we live; and why should we trouble ourselves to tell or hear it oftener? Sam. Johnson."

Johnson maintained a long and intimate friendship with Mr. Welch, one of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace for Westminster. Johnson, who had an eager and unceasing curiosity to know human life in all its variety, attended Mr. Welch in his office for a whole winter, to hear the examinations of the culprits; but he found an almost uniform tenor of misfortune, wretchedness, and profligacy. Mr. Welch's health being impaired, Johnson, by his interest, procured him leave of absence to go to Italy, and a promise that the pension or salary of two hundred pounds a year should not be discontinued. Mr. Welch accordingly went, accompanied by his daughter Anne.

To Saunders Welch, Esq. at the English Coffee-House, Rome.

"You have travelled with this felicity, that your companion is not to part from you at your journey's end; but you are to live on together, to help each other's recollection, and to supply each other's omissions. The world has few greater pleasures than that which two friends enjoy, in tracing back, at some distant time, those transactions and events through which they have passed together. One of the old man's

miseries is, that he cannot easily find a companion able to partake with him of the past.

"Miss Nancy has doubtless kept a constant and copious journal. She must not expect to be welcome when she returns, without a great mass of information. If it were not now too late, I would advise her to note the impression which the first sight of anything new and wonderful made upon her mind. SAM. JOHNSON."

BOSWELL TO DR. JOHNSON.

"WHAT do you say to '*Taxation no Tyranny*,' now, after Lord North's declaration or confession, or whatever else his conciliatory speech should be called? I never differed from you in politicks but upon two points, — the Middlesex Election, and the Taxation of the Americans by the British *Houses of Representatives*. There is a *charm* in the word *Parliament*, so I avoid it. As I am a steady and a warm Tory, I regret that the King does not see it to be better for him to receive constitutional supplies from his American subjects by the voice of their own assemblies, where his Royal Person is represented, than through the medium of his British subjects."

"If (said he,) a man has splendour from his expence, if he spends his money in pride or in pleasure, he has value: but if others spend it for him, which is most commonly the case, he has no advantage from it."

I found him sitting with Mrs. Williams. The room formerly allotted to me was now appropriated to a charitable purpose; Mrs. Desmoulins, her daughter, and a Miss Carmichael being all lodged in it. Such was his humanity, and such his generosity, that Mrs. Desmoulins herself told me, he allowed her half-a-guinea a week. Let it be remembered, that this was above a twelfth part of his pension.

His liberality, indeed, was at all periods of his life very remarkable. Mr. Howard, of Lichfield, at whose father's house Johnson had in his early years been kindly received, told me,

that when he was a boy at the Charter-house, his father wrote to him to go and pay a visit to Mr. Samuel Johnson, which he accordingly did, and found him in an upper room, of poor appearance. Johnson received him with much courteousness, and talked a great deal to him, as to a school-boy, of the course of his education, and other particulars. He added, that when he was going away, Mr. Johnson presented him with half-a-guinea; and this, said Mr. Howard, was at a time when he probably had not another.

Tom Davies joined us. After he went away, Johnson blamed his folly in quitting the stage, by which he and his wife got five hundred pounds a year. I said, I believed it was owing to Churchill's attack upon him,

"He mouths a sentence, as curs mouth a bone."

JOHNSON. "I believe so, too, Sir. But what a man is he, who is to be driven from the stage by a line? Another line would have driven him from his shop."

Mr. Wilkes pleasantly said, "What! does *he* talk of liberty? *Liberty* is as ridiculous in *his* mouth as *Religion* in *mine*." Mr. Wilkes's advice as to the best mode of speaking at the bar of the House of Commons, was not more respectful towards the senate, than that of Dr. Johnson. "Be as impudent as you can, as merry as you can, and say whatever comes uppermost. Jack Lee is the best heard there of any Counsel; and he is the most impudent dog, and always abusing us."

Mrs. Thrale made a very characteristical remark:—"I do not know what will please Dr. Johnson: but I know that it will displease him to praise any thing, even what he likes, extravagantly."

I repeated a ridiculous story told me by an old man, a passenger with me in the stage-coach. Mrs. Thrale called it "The story told you by the old *woman*." "Now, Madam, (said I,) give me leave to catch you in the fact: it was not an old *woman*, but an old *man*, whom I mentioned as having told me this." I presumed to take an opportunity, in pre-

sence of Johnson, of shewing this lively lady how ready she was, unintentionally, to deviate from exact authenticity of narration.

Thomas à Kempis (he observed,) must be a good book, as the world has opened its arms to receive it. It is said to have been printed, in one language or other, as many times as there have been months since it first came out.° I always was struck by this sentence: "Be not angry that you cannot make others as you wish them to be, since you cannot make yourself as you wish to be."

JOHNSON. "A man loves to review his own mind. That is the use of a diary, or journal." LORD TRIMLESTOWN. "True, Sir. As the ladies love to see themselves in a glass; so a man likes to see himself in his journal." BOSWELL. "And as a lady adjusts her dress before a mirrour, a man adjusts his character by looking at his journal."

"Accustom your children (said he,) constantly to this; if a thing happened at one window, and they, when relating it, say that it happened at another, instantly check them; you do not know where deviation from truth will end." Our lively hostess, whose fancy was impatient of the rein, fidgeted at this, and ventured to say, "Nay, this is too much. If Mr. Johnson should forbid me to drink tea, I would comply, as I should feel the restraint only twice a day; but little variations in narrative must happen a thousand times a day, if one is not perpetually watching." JOHNSON. "Well, Madam, and you *ought* to be perpetually watching. It is more from carelessness about truth than from intentional lying, that there is so much falsehood in the world."

He inculcated upon all his friends the importance of perpetual vigilance against the slightest degrees of falsehood; the effect of which, as Sir Joshua Reynolds observed to me, has been, that all who were of his *school* are distinguished for a love of truth and accuracy, which they would not have possessed in the same degree, if they had not been acquainted with Johnson.

He said, "John Wesley's conversation is good, but he is

never at leisure. He is always obliged to go at a certain hour. This is very disagreeable to a man who loves to fold his legs and have out his talk, as I do."

F.° "I have been looking at this famous antique marble dog of Mr. Jennings, valued at a thousand guineas, said to be Alcibiades's dog." JOHNSON. "His tail then must be docked. That was the mark of Alcibiades's dog." E. "A thousand guineas! The representation of no animal whatever is worth so much. At this rate a dead dog would indeed be better than a living lion." JOHNSON. "Sir, it is not the worth of the thing, but of the skill in forming it which is so highly estimated. Every thing that enlarges the sphere of human powers, that shows man he can do what he thought he could not do, is valuable. The first man who balanced a straw upon his nose; Johnson who rode upon three horses at a time; in short, all such men deserved the applause of mankind, not on account of the use of what they did, but of the dexterity which they exhibited." BOSWELL. "Yet a misapplication of time and assiduity is not to be encouraged. Addison, in one of his 'Spectators,' commends the judgement of a King, who as a suitable reward to a man that by long perseverance had attained to the art of throwing a barley-corn through the eye of a needle, gave him a bushel of barley." JOHNSON. "He must have been a King of Scotland, where barley is scarce."

C. "It is remarkable that the most unhealthy countries, where there are the most destructive diseases, such as Egypt and Bengal, are the most populous." JOHNSON. "Countries which are the most populous have the most destructive diseases. *That* is the true state of the proposition. Disease cannot be the cause of populousness, for it not only carries off a great proportion of the people; but those who are left are weakened, and unfit for the purposes of increase."

R. "Mr. E., I don't mean to flatter, but when posterity reads one of your speeches in Parliament, it will be difficult to believe that you took so much pains, knowing with certainty that it could produce no effect, that not one vote would be

gained by it." E. "Waiving your compliment to me, I shall say in general, that it is very well worth while for a man to take pains to speak well in Parliament. A man, who has vanity, speaks to display his talents; and if a man speaks well, he gradually establishes a certain reputation and consequence in the general opinion, which sooner or later will have its political reward. Besides, though not one vote is gained, a good speech has its effect. Though an act which has been ably opposed passes into a law, yet in its progress it is modelled, it is softened in such a manner, that we see plainly the Minister has been told, that the members attached to him are so sensible of its injustice or absurdity from what they have heard, that it must be altered." JOHNSON. "And, Sir, there is a gratification of pride. Though we cannot out-vote them we will out-argue them. They shall not do wrong without its being shown both to themselves and to the world." E. "I believe in any body of men in England I should have been in the Minority; I have always been in the Minority." P. "The House of Commons resembles a private company. How seldom is any man convinced by another's argument; passion and pride rise against it."

JOHNSON. "English and High Dutch have no similarity to the eye, though radically the same. Once when looking into Low Dutch, I found, in a whole page, only one word similar to English; *stroem*, like *stream*, and it signified *tide*." E. "I remember having seen a Dutch Sonnet, in which I found this word, *roesnopies: roes*, rose, and *nopie*, knob; *rosebuds*."

E. "From experience I have learnt to think *better* of mankind." JOHNSON. "From my experience I have found them worse in commercial dealings, more disposed to cheat, than I had any notion of; but more disposed to do one another good than I had conceived." J. "Less just and more beneficent." JOHNSON. "And really it is wonderful, considering how much attention is necessary for men to take care of themselves, and ward off immediate evils which press upon them, it is wonderful how much they do for others. As it is

said of the greatest liar, that he tells more truth than falsehood; so it may be said of the worst man, that he does more good than evil." P. "There is a very good story told of Sir Godfrey Kneller, in his character of a justice of the peace. A gentleman brought his servant before him, upon an accusation of having stolen some money from him; but it having come out that he had laid it purposely in the servant's way, in order to try his honesty, Sir Godfrey sent the master to prison." JOHNSON. "To resist temptation once, is not a sufficient proof of honesty. If a servant, indeed, were to resist the continued temptation of silver lying in a window, as some people let it lye, when he is sure his master does not know how much there is of it, he would give a strong proof of honesty. But this is a proof to which you have no right to put a man." BOSWELL. "I have known a man resolve to put friendship to the test, by asking a man to lend him money, merely with that view, when he did not want it." JOHNSON. "That is very wrong, Sir. Your friend may be a narrow man, and yet have many good qualities: narrowness may be his only fault. Now you are trying his general character as a friend, by one particular singly, in which he happens to be defective, when, in truth, his character is composed of many particulars."

E. "I understand the hogshead of claret, which this society was favoured with by our friend the Dean, is nearly out: I think he should be written to, to send another of the same kind. Let the request be made with a happy ambiguity of expression, so that we may have the chance of his sending *it* also as a present." JOHNSON. "I am willing to offer my services as secretary on this occasion." P. "As many as are for Dr. Johnson being secretary hold up your hands. — Carried unanimously." BOSWELL. "He will be our Dictator." JOHNSON. "No, the company is to dictate to me. I am only to write for wine; and I am quite disinterested, as I drink none; I shall not be suspected of having forged the application. I am no more than humble *scribe*." E. "Then you shall *prescribe*." BOSWELL. "Very well. The first play of words to-day." J. "No, no; the *bulls* in Ireland."

JOHNSON. "Were I your Dictator, you should have no wine. It would be my business *cavere ne quid detrimenti Respublica caperet*, and wine is dangerous. Rome was ruined by luxury" (smiling). E. "If you allow no wine as Dictator, you shall not have me for your master of horse."

I drank tea with Johnson at Dr. Taylor's, where he had dined. He was very silent this evening; and read in a variety of books: suddenly throwing down one, and taking up another.

He talked of going to Streatham that night. TAYLOR. "You'll be robbed, if you do: or you must shoot a highwayman." JOHNSON. "But I would rather shoot him in the instant when he is attempting to rob me, than afterwards swear against him at the Old Bailey, to take away his life, after he has robbed me. I am surer I am right in the one case, than in the other. I may be mistaken as to the man when I swear: I cannot be mistaken, if I shoot him in the act. Besides, we feel less reluctance to take away a man's life when we are heated by the injury, than to do it at a distance of time by an oath, after we have cooled." BOSWELL. "So, Sir, you would rather act from the motive of private passion, than that of publick advantage." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, when I shoot the highwayman, I act from both." BOSWELL. "Very well, very well. — There is no catching him." JOHNSON. "At the same time, one does not know what to say. For perhaps one may, a year after, hang himself from uneasiness for having shot a highwayman. Few minds are fit to be trusted with so great a thing." BOSWELL. "Then, Sir, you would not shoot him?" JOHNSON. "But I might be vexed afterwards for that too."

I had said, that in his company we did not so much interchange conversation, as listen to him; and that Dunning observed upon this, "One is always willing to listen to Dr. Johnson;" to which I answered, "That is a great deal from you, Sir." — "Yes, Sir, (said Johnson,) a great deal indeed. Here is a man willing to listen, to whom the world is listening all the rest of the year." BOSWELL. "I think, Sir, it is right

to tell one man of such a handsome thing, which has been said of him by another." JOHNSON. "Undoubtedly it is right, Sir."

JOHNSON. "Sir; it must be born with a man to be contented to take up with little things. Women have a great advantage that they may take up with little things, without disgracing themselves: a man cannot, except with fiddling. Had I learnt to fiddle, I should have done nothing else." BOSWELL. "Pray, Sir, did you ever play on any musical instrument?" JOHNSON. "No, Sir. I once bought me a flagelet; but I never made out a tune." BOSWELL. "A flagelet, Sir! — so small an instrument? I should have liked to hear you play on the violoncello. *That* should have been *your* instrument." JOHNSON. "Sir, I might as well have played on the violoncello as another; but I should have done nothing else. No, Sir; a man would never undertake great things, could he be amused with small. I once tried knotting. Dempster's sister undertook to teach me; but I could not learn it." BOSWELL. "So, Sir; it will be related in pompous narrative, 'Once for his amusement he tried knotting; nor did this Hercules disdain the distaff.'" JOHNSON. "Knitting of stockings is a good amusement. As a freeman of Aberdeen ° I should be a knitter of stockings."

I told him, that I had been present the day before, when Mrs. Montague, the literary lady, sat to Miss Reynolds for her picture; and that she said, "she had bound up Mr. Gibbon's History, as it gave, in an elegant manner, the substance of the bad writers *medii ævi*, which the late Lord Lyttleton advised her to read." JOHNSON. "Sir, she has not read them: she shews none of this impetuosity to me: she does not know Greek, and, I fancy, knows little Latin. She is willing you should think she knows them; but she does not say she does." BOSWELL. "Mr. Harris, who was present, agreed with her." JOHNSON. "Harris was laughing at her, Sir. Harris is a sound sullen scholar; he does not like interlopers. Harris, however, is a prig, and a bad prig."

JOHNSON. "Sometimes things may be made darker by defi-

nition. I see a *cow*. I define her, *Animal quadrupes ruminans cornutum*. But a goat ruminates, and a cow may have no horns. *Cow* is plainer." BOSWELL. "I think Dr. Franklin's definition of *Man* a good one — 'A tool-making animal.'" JOHNSON. "But many a man never made a tool: and suppose a man without arms, he could not make a tool."

JOHNSON. "Now what a wretch must he be, who is content with such conversation as can be had among savages! You may remember an officer at Fort Augustus, who had served in America, told us of a woman whom they were obliged to *bind*, in order to get her back from savage life." BOSWELL. "She must have been an animal, a beast." JOHNSON. "Sir, she was a speaking cat."

Of Goldsmith, he said, "He was not an agreeable companion, for he talked always for fame. A man who does so, never can be pleasing. The man who talks to unburthen his mind, is the man to delight you."

Soon after our arrival at Thrale's, I heard one of the maids calling eagerly on another, to go to Dr. Johnson. I wondered what this could mean. I afterwards learnt, that it was to give her a Bible, which he had brought from London as a present. He was for a considerable time occupied in reading "*Memoires de Fontenelle*," leaning and swinging upon the low gate into the court, without his hat.

Sir John Pringle had expressed a wish that I would ask Dr. Johnson's opinion what were the best English sermons for style. *Atterbury?* JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, one of the best." BOSWELL. "*Tillotson?*" JOHNSON. "Why, not now. I should not advise a preacher at this day to imitate Tillotson's style."

Mrs. Thrale expressed a wish to see Scotland. JOHNSON. "Seeing Scotland, Madam, is only seeing a worse England. It is seeing the flower gradually fade away to the naked stalk. Seeing the Hebrides, indeed, is seeing quite a different scene."

Our poor friend, Mr. Thomas Davies, was soon to have a benefit at Drury-lane theatre. I proposed that he should be

brought on to speak a Prologue upon the occasion; as, that when now grown *old*, he was obliged to cry, "Poor Tom's *a-cold;*" — that he had been driven from the stage by a Churchill was no disgrace, for a Churchill had beat the French; — that he had been satyrised as "mouthing a sentence as curs mouth a bone," but he was now glad of a bone to pick. — "Nay, (said Johnson,) I would have him to say,

'Mad Tom is come to see the world again.'"

Talking of a man's resolving to deny himself the use of wine, from moral and religious considerations, he said, "He must not doubt about it. When one doubts as to pleasure, we know what will be the conclusion. I now no more think of drinking wine, than a horse does. The wine upon the table is no more for me, than for the dog that is under the table."

At Sir Joshua Reynolds', Mr. Ramsay entertained us with his observations upon Horace's villa, which he had examined with great care. The Bishop of St. Asaph, Dr. Johnson, and Mr. Cambridge, joined with Mr. Ramsay, in recollecting the various lines in Horace relating to the subject.

Horace's journey to Brundisium being mentioned, Johnson observed, that the brook which he describes is to be seen now, exactly as at that time; and that he had often wondered how it happened, that small brooks, such as this, kept the same situation for ages, notwithstanding earthquakes, by which even mountains have been changed, and agriculture, which produces such a variation upon the surface of the earth.

The Bishop said, it appeared from Horace's writings that he was a cheerful contented man. JOHNSON. "We have no reason to believe that, my lord. Are we to think Pope was happy, because he says so in his writings? We see in his writings what he wished the state of his mind to appear. Dr. Young, who pined for preferment, talks with contempt of it in his writings, and affects to despise every thing that he did not despise." BISHOP OF ST. ASAPH. "He was like other chaplains, looking for vacancies: but that is not peculiar to the clergy. I remember when I was with the army, after

the battle of Lafeldt, the officers seriously grumbled that no general was killed."

Goldsmith being mentioned, Johnson observed, that he once complained to him, in ludicrous terms of distress, "Whenever I write anything, the publick *make a point* to know nothing about it:" but that his "Traveller" brought him into high reputation. LANGTON. "There is not one bad line in that poem; not one of Dryden's careless verses." SIR JOSHUA. "I was glad to hear Charles Fox say, it was one of the finest poems in the English language." LANGTON. "Why were you glad? You surely had no doubt of this before." JOHNSON. "No; the merit of 'The Traveller' is so well established, that Mr. Fox's praise cannot augment it, nor his censure diminish it." SIR JOSHUA. "But his friends may suspect they had too great a partiality for him." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, the partiality of his friends was always against him. It was with difficulty we could give him a hearing. Goldsmith had no settled notions upon any subject; so he talked always at random. It seemed to be his intention to blurt out whatever was in his mind, and see what would become of it. He was angry too, when catched in an absurdity; but it did not prevent him from falling into another the next minute. I remember Chamier, after talking with him some time, said, 'Well, I do believe he wrote this poem himself: and, let me tell you, that is believing a great deal.' Chamier once asked him, what he meant by *slow*, the last word in the first line of 'The Traveller,'

'Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow,' —

Did he mean tardiness of locomotion? Goldsmith, who would say something without consideration, answered, 'Yes.' I was sitting by, and said, 'No, Sir, you do not mean tardiness of locomotion; you mean, that sluggishness of mind which comes upon a man in solitude.' Chamier believed then that I had written the line, as much as if he had seen me write it. Goldsmith, however, was a man, who, whatever he wrote, did it better than any other man could do. He deserved a

place in Westminster-Abbey; and every year he lived, would have deserved it better. He had, indeed, been at no pains to fill his mind with knowledge. He transplanted it from one place to another; and it did not settle in his mind; so he could not tell what was in his own books."

JOHNSON. "No wise man will go to live in the country, unless he has something to do which can be better done in the country." BOSWELL. "I fancy, London is the best place for society; though I have heard that the very first society of Paris is still beyond any thing that we have here." JOHNSON. "Sir, I question if in Paris, such a company as is sitting round this table could be got together in less than half a year. They talk in France of the felicity of men and women living together: the truth is, that there the men are not higher than the women, they know no more than the women do, and they are not held down in their conversation by the presence of women." RAMSAY. "Literature is upon the growth, it is in its spring in France: here it is rather *passée*." JOHNSON. "Literature was in France long before we had it. Paris was the second city for the revival of letters. Our literature came to us through France. Caxton printed only two books, Chaucer, and Gower, that were not translations from the French; and Chaucer, we know, took much from the Italians. No, Sir, if literature be in its spring in France, it is a second spring; it is after a winter. Yet there is, probably, a great deal of learning in France, because they have such a number of religious establishments; so many men who have nothing else to do but study. I do not know this; but I take it upon the common principles of chance. Where there are many shooters, some will hit."

We talked of old age. Johnson (now in his seventieth year) said, "It is a man's own fault, it is from want of use, if his mind grows torpid in old age." The Bishop asked, if an old man does not lose faster than he gets. JOHNSON. "I think not, my Lord, if he exerts himself." One of the company rashly observed, it was happy for an old man that insensibility comes upon him. JOHNSON: (with a noble elevation and

disdain,) "No, Sir, I should never be happy by being less rational." BISHOP OF ST. ASAPH. "Your wish then, Sir, is, γηράσκειν διδασκόμενος." JOHNSON. "Yes, my Lord." His Lordship mentioned a charitable establishment in Wales, where people were maintained, and supplied with everything, upon the condition of their contributing the weekly produce of their labour; and he said, they grew quite torpid for want of property. JOHNSON. "They have no object for hope. Their condition cannot be better. It is rowing without a port."

One of the company asked him the meaning of the expression in Juvenal, *unius lacertæ*. JOHNSON. "I think it clear enough; as much ground as one may have a chance to find a lizard upon."

This season, there was a whimsical fashion in the news-papers of applying Shakspeare's words to describe living persons well known in the world. Somebody said to Johnson, across the table, that he had not been in those characters. "Yes (said he,) I have. I should have been sorry to be left out." He then repeated what had been applied to him,

"You must borrow me GARGANTUA's mouth."

Miss Reynolds not perceiving at once the meaning of this, he was obliged to explain it to her, which had something of an awkward and ludicrous effect. "Why, Madam, it has a reference to me, as using big words, which require the mouth of a giant to pronounce them. Gargantua is the name of a giant in Rabelais." BOSWELL. "But, Sir, there is another amongst them for you:

> 'He would not flatter Neptune for his trident,
> Or Jove for his power to thunder.'"

JOHNSON. "There is nothing marked in that. No, Sir, Gargantua is the best." When I, a little while afterwards, repeated his sarcasm on Kenrick, which was received with applause, he asked, "*Who* said that?" and on my suddenly answering, — *Gargantua*, he looked serious, which was a sufficient indication that he did not wish it to be kept up.

When we went to the drawing-room, there was a rich assemblage. After wandering about in a kind of pleasing distraction for some time, I got into a corner, with Johnson, Garrick, and Harris. GARRICK. "Pray, Sir, have you read Potter's Æschylus?" JOHNSON. "We must try its effect as an English poem; that is the way to judge of the merit of a translation. Translations are, in general, for people who cannot read the original." I mentioned the vulgar saying, that Pope's Homer was not a good representation of the original. JOHNSON. "Sir, it is the greatest work of the kind that has ever been produced." — "To be distinct, we must talk *analytically*. If we analyse language, we must speak of it grammatically: if we analyse argument, we must speak of it logically."

GARRICK. "What! eh! is Strahan a good judge of an Epigram? Is not he rather an *obtuse* man, eh?" JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, he may not be a judge of an Epigram: but you see he is a judge of what is *not* an Epigram." GARRICK. "Yes. I know enough of that. There was a reverend gentleman (Mr. Hawkins,) who wrote a tragedy, the SIEGE of something, which I refused." HARRIS. "So, the siege was raised." JOHNSON. "Ay, he came to me and complained; and told me that Garrick said his play was wrong in the *concoction*. Now what is the concoction of a play?" (Here Garrick started and twisted himself, and seemed sorely vexed; for Johnson told me, he believed the story was true.) GARRICK. "I — I — I — said, *first* concoction." JOHNSON. (smiling.) "Well, he left out *first*. And Rich, he said, refused him *in false English:* he could show it under his hand." GARRICK. "He wrote to me in violent wrath, for having refused his play: 'Sir, this is growing a very serious and terrible affair. I am resolved to publish my play. I will appeal to the world and how will your judgement appear!' I answered, 'Sir, notwithstanding all the seriousness, and all the terrours, I have no objection to your publishing your play; and as you live at a great distance, (Devonshire, I believe,) if you will send it to me, I will convey it to the press.' I never heard more of it, ha! ha! ha!"

I found Johnson at home in the morning. I said, "You were yesterday, Sir, in remarkably good humour. There was no bold offender. There was not one capital conviction. It was a maiden assize. You had on your white gloves." JOHNSON. "Sir, I knocked Fox on the head, without ceremony. Reynolds is too much under Fox and Burke at present. He is under the *Fox star*, and the *Irish constellation*. He is always under some planet."

Johnson was not in such spirits as he had been the preceding day, and for a considerable time little was said. At last he burst forth: "Subordination is sadly broken down in this age. No man, now, has the same authority which his father had, — except a gaoler. No master has it over his servants: it is diminished in our colleges; nay, in our grammar-schools." BOSWELL. "What is the cause of this, Sir?" JOHNSON. "Why, the coming in of the Scotch" (laughing sarcastically). BOSWELL. "That is to say, things have been turned topsy-turvy. — But your serious cause." JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, there are many causes, the chief of which is, I think, the great increase of money. No man now depends upon the Lord of the Manour, when he can send to another country, and fetch provisions. The shoe-black at the entry of my court does not depend on me. I can deprive him but of a penny a day, which he hopes somebody else will bring him; and that penny I must carry to another shoe-black, so the trade suffers nothing. Paternity used to be considered as of itself a great thing, which had a right to many claims. That is, in general, reduced to very small bounds. My hope is, that as anarchy produces tyranny, this extreme relaxation will produce *freni strictio*." [6]

I slily introduced Mr. Garrick's fame, and his assuming the airs of a great man. JOHNSON. "Sir, it is wonderful how *little* Garrick assumes. No, Sir, Garrick *fortunam reverenter habet*. Consider, Sir; celebrated men, such as you have mentioned, have had their applause at a distance; but Garrick had it dashed in his face, sounded in his ears, and went home every night with the plaudits of a thousand in

his *cranium*. Then, Sir, Garrick did not *find*, but *made* his way to the tables, the levees, and almost the bed-chambers of the great. Then, Sir, Garrick had under him a numerous body of people; who, from fear of his power, and hopes of his favour, and admiration of his talents, were constantly submissive to him. And here is a man who has advanced the dignity of his profession. Garrick has made a player a higher character, and all this supported by great wealth of his own acquisition. If all this had happened to me, I should have had a couple of fellows with long poles walking before me, to knock down every body that stood in the way. Consider, if all this had happened to Cibber or Quin, they'd have jumped over the moon. — Yet Garrick speaks to *us*" (smiling). BOSWELL. "And Garrick is a very good man, a charitable man." JOHNSON. "Sir, a liberal man. He has given away more money than any man in England. There may be a little vanity mixed: but he has shewn, that money is not his first object." BOSWELL. "Yet Foote used to say of him, that he walked out with an intention to do a generous action; but turning the corner of a street, he met with the ghost of a halfpenny, which frightened him." JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, that is very true, too; for I never knew a man of whom it could be said with less certainty to-day, what he will do to-morrow, than Garrick; it depends so much on his humour at the time." SCOTT. "I am glad to hear of his liberality. He has been represented as very saving." JOHNSON. "With his domestick saving we have nothing to do. I remember drinking tea with him long ago, when Peg Woffington made it, and he grumbled at her for making it too strong. He had then begun to feel money in his purse, and did not know when he should have enough of it."

On the subject of wealth, the proper use of it, and the effects of that art which is called economy, he observed, "It is wonderful to think how men of very large estates not only spend their yearly incomes, but are often actually in want of money. It is clear they have not value for what they spend. A great proportion must go in waste; and, indeed, this is

the case with most people, whatever their fortune is." Boswell. "What is waste?" Johnson. "Why, Sir, breaking bottles, and a thousand other things. Waste cannot be accurately told, though we are sensible how destructive it is. Economy, by which a certain income is made to maintain a man genteelly, and waste, by which, on the same income, another man lives shabbily, cannot be defined. It is a very nice thing; as one man wears his coat out much sooner than another."

We talked of war. Johnson. "Every man thinks meanly of himself for not having been a soldier, or not having been at sea." Boswell. "Lord Mansfield does not." Johnson. "Sir, if Lord Mansfield were in a company of General Officers and Admirals who have been in service, he would shrink; he'd wish to creep under the table." Boswell. "No; he'd think he could *try* them all." Johnson. "No, Sir: were Socrates and Charles the Twelfth of Sweden both present in any company, and Socrates to say, 'Follow me, and hear a lecture in philosophy;' and Charles, laying his hand on his sword, to say, 'Follow me, and dethrone the Czar;' a man would be ashamed to follow Socrates. Sir, the impression is universal: yet it is strange. As to the sailor, when you look down from the quarter-deck to the space below, you see the utmost extremity of human misery: such crowding, such filth, such stench!" Boswell. "Yet sailors are happy." Johnson. "They are happy as brutes are happy, with a piece of fresh meat, — with the grossest sensuality. But, Sir, the profession of soldiers and sailors has the dignity of danger. Mankind reverence those who have got over fear, which is so general a weakness." Scott. "But is not courage mechanical, and to be acquired?" Johnson. "Why yes, Sir, in a collective sense. Soldiers consider themselves only as part of a great machine."

I have heard Mr. Gibbon remark, "that Mr. Fox could not be afraid of Dr. Johnson; yet he certainly was very shy of saying any thing in Dr. Johnson's presence."

I said I asked questions in order to be instructed and enter-

tained; I repaired eagerly to the fountain; but the moment he gave me a hint, the moment he put a lock upon the well, I desisted. — "But, Sir, (said he,) that is forcing one to do a disagreeable thing:" and he continued to rate me. "Nay, Sir, (said I,) when I can no longer drink, do not make the fountain of your wit play upon me and wet me."

He sometimes could not bear being teazed with questions. Once a gentleman asked so many, as, "What did you do, Sir?" "What did you say, Sir?" that he at last grew enraged. "I will not be put to the *question*. Don't you consider, Sir, that these are not the manners of a gentleman? I will not be baited with *what* and *why;* what is this? what is that? why is a cow's tail long? why is a fox's tail bushy?" The gentleman, a good deal out of countenance, said, "Why, Sir, you are so good, that I venture to trouble you." JOHNSON. "Sir, my being so *good* is no reason why you should be so *ill*."

He expressed a particular enthusiasm with respect to visiting the wall of China. I said I really believed I should go and see the wall of China had I not children, of whom it was my duty to take care. "Sir, (said he,) you would be raising your children to eminence. There would be a lustre reflected upon them from your spirit and curiosity. They would be at all times regarded as the children of a man who had gone to visit the wall of China. I am serious, Sir."

He said, "Will you go home with me?" "Sir, (said I,) it is late; but I'll go with you for three minutes." JOHNSON. "Or *four*." We went to Mrs. Williams's room, where we found Mr. Allen the printer, the landlord of his house in Bolt-court, his very old acquaintance; and what was exceedingly amusing, though he was of a very diminutive size, he used, even in Johnson's presence, to imitate the stately periods and slow and solemn utterance of the great man. — I this evening boasted, that although I did not write what is called stenography, I had a method of my own of writing half words, and leaving out some altogether, so as yet to keep the substance and language. He defied me, as he had once defied an actual shorthand writer; and he made the experiment by

reading slowly and distinctly a part of Robertson's "History of America." It was found that I had it very imperfectly.

Dr. Dodd's poem, entitled "Thoughts in Prison," was lying upon his table. Having looked at the prayer at the end of it, he said, "What *evidence* is there that this was composed the night before he suffered? *I* do not believe it." He then read aloud where he prays for the King, &c. and observed, "Sir, do you think that a man, the night before he is to be hanged, cares for the succession of a royal family? — Though, he *may* have composed this prayer then. A man who has been canting all his life, may cant to the last. — And yet, a man who has been refused a pardon after so much petitioning, would hardly be praying thus fervently for the King."

He and I, and Mrs. Williams, went to dine with the Reverend Dr. Percy. Talking of Goldsmith, Johnson said, he was very envious. I defended him, by observing that he owned it frankly upon all occasions. JOHNSON. "Sir, you are enforcing the charge. He had so much envy, that he could not conceal it. He was so full of it, that he overflowed. He talked of it to be sure often enough."

Johnson praised Pennant very highly. Dr. Percy knowing himself to be the heir male of the ancient Percies could not sit quietly and hear a man praised, who had spoken disrespectfully of Alnwick-Castle and the Duke's pleasure-grounds. He therefore opposed Johnson eagerly. JOHNSON. "Pennant, in what he has said of Alnwick, has done what he intended; he has made you very angry." PERCY. "He has said the garden is trim, representing it like a citizen's parterre, when the truth is, there is a very large extent of fine turf and gravel walks." JOHNSON. "Your extent puts me in mind of the citizen's enlarged dinner, two pieces of roast-beef, and two puddings." PERCY. "He pretends to give the natural history of Northumberland, and yet takes no notice of the immense number of trees planted there of late." JOHNSON. "That, Sir, has nothing to do with the *natural* history; that is *civil* history. A man who gives the natural history of the oak, is not to tell how many oaks have been planted in this place

or that. A man who gives the natural history of the cow, is not to tell how many cows are milked at Islington. The animal is the same, whether milked in the Park or at Islington." PERCY. "Pennant does not describe well: a carrier who goes along the side of Lochlomond would describe it better." JOHNSON. "I think he describes very well. *I* travelled after him." PERCY. "But, my good friend, you are short-sighted, and do not see so well as I do." I wondered at Dr. Percy's venturing thus. JOHNSON. (pointedly) "This is the resentment of a narrow mind, because he did not find every thing in Northumberland." PERCY. (feeling the stroke) "Sir, you may be as rude as you please." JOHNSON. "Hold, Sir! don't talk of rudeness; remember, Sir, you told me, (puffing hard with passion struggling for a vent) I was short-sighted. We have done with civility. We are to be as rude as we please." PERCY. "Upon my honour, Sir, I did not mean to be uncivil." JOHNSON. "I cannot say so, Sir; for I *did* mean to be uncivil, thinking *you* had been uncivil." Dr. Percy rose, ran up to him, and taking him by the hand, assured him affectionately that his meaning had been misunderstood; upon which a reconciliation instantly took place. JOHNSON. "My dear Sir, I am willing you shall *hang* Pennant." PERCY. "Pennant complains that the helmet is not hung out to invite to the hall of hospitality. Now I never heard that it was a custom to hang out a *helmet*." JOHNSON. "Hang him up, hang him up." BOSWELL. (humouring the joke) "Hang out his skull instead of a helmet, and you may drink ale out of it in your hall of Odin, as he is your enemy; that will be truly ancient. *There* will be 'Northern Antiquities.'" JOHNSON. "He's a *Whig*, Sir; a *sad dog*. But he's the best traveller I ever read; he observes more things than any one else does."

Mr. Pennant, like his countrymen in general, has the true spirit of a *gentleman*. As a proof of it, I shall quote from his "LONDON" the passage, in which he speaks of my illustrious friend. "I must by no means omit *Bolt-court*, the long residence of Doctor SAMUEL JOHNSON, a man of the strongest

natural abilities, great learning, a most retentive memory, of the deepest and most unaffected piety and morality, mingled with those numerous weaknesses and prejudices which his friends have kindly taken care to draw from their dread abode. I brought on myself his transient anger, by observing that in his tour in *Scotland*, he once had long and woeful experience of oats being the food of men in *Scotland* as they were of horses in *England*. It was a national reflection unworthy of him, and I shot my bolt. In return he gave me a tender hug. *Con amore* he also said of me '*The dog is a Whig.*'"

We had a calm after the storm, staid the evening and supped, and were pleasant and gay. But Dr. Percy told me he was very uneasy at what had passed; for there was a gentleman there who was well acquainted with the Northumberland family, to whom he hoped to have appeared more respectable, by shewing how intimate he was with Dr. Johnson, and who might now, on the contrary, go away with an opinion to his disadvantage. He begged I would mention this to Dr. Johnson, which I afterwards did. His observation upon it was, "This comes of *stratagem*: had he told me that he wished to appear to advantage before that gentleman, he should have been at the top of the house all the time." "Then, Sir, (said I,) I will write a letter to you upon the subject of the unlucky contest of that day, and you will be kind enough to put in writing as an answer to that letter, what you have now said, and as Lord Percy is to dine with us at General Paoli's soon, I will take an opportunity to read the correspondence in his Lordship's presence." This friendly scheme was accordingly carried into execution without Dr. Percy's knowledge. He was highly delighted with Dr. Johnson's letter, of which I gave him a copy. He said, "I would rather have this than degrees from all the Universities in Europe. It will be for me, and my children and grand-children." Dr. Johnson having afterwards asked me if I had given him a copy of it, and being told I had, was offended, and insisted that I should get it back, which I did.

(*The letter*) To Boswell.

"The debate between Dr. Percy and me is one of those foolish controversies, which begin upon a question of which neither party cares how it is decided, and which is, nevertheless, continued to acrimony, by the vanity with which every man resists confutation. If Percy is really offended, I am sorry; for he is a man whom I never knew to offend any one. It is true that he vexes me sometimes, but I am afraid it is by making me feel my own ignorance. Percy's attention to poetry has given grace and splendour to his studies of antiquity. A mere antiquarian is a rugged being. Sam. Johnson."

At Mr. Langton's he was in a very silent mood. Before dinner he said nothing but "Pretty baby," to one of the children. Langton said, that he could repeat Johnson's conversation before dinner, as Johnson had said that he could repeat a complete chapter of "The Natural History of Iceland," from the Danish of *Horrebow*, the whole of which was exactly thus:

"Chap. LXXII. *Concerning Snakes.*

"There are no snakes to be met with throughout the whole island."

Johnson. "I think every man whatever has a peculiar style, which may be discovered by nice examination and comparison with others: but a man must write a great deal to make his style obviously discernible. As logicians say, this appropriation of style is infinite *in potestate*, limited *in actu*."

Dr. Dodd had once wished to be a member of the Literary Club. Johnson. "I should be sorry if any of our Club were hanged. I will not say but some of them deserve it." Beauclerk (supposing this to be aimed at persons for whom he had at that time a wonderful fancy, which, however, did not last long,) was irritated, and eagerly said, "You, Sir, have a friend (naming him) who deserves to be hanged; for he speaks behind their backs against those with whom he lives on the

best terms, and attacks them in the news-papers. *He* certainly ought to be *kicked*." JOHNSON. "Sir, we all do this in some degree: '*Veniam petimus° damusque vicissim.*'"

JOHNSON. "To be merely satisfied is not enough. It is in refinement and elegance that the civilized man differs from the savage. A great part of our industry, and all our ingenuity is exercised in procuring pleasure; and, Sir, a hungry man has not the same pleasure in eating a plain dinner, that a hungry man has in eating a luxurious dinner. You see I put the case fairly. A hungry man may have as much, nay, more pleasure in eating a plain dinner, than a man grown fastidious has in eating a luxurious dinner. But I suppose the man who decides between the two dinners, to be equally a hungry man."

Dr. Johnson endeavoured to trace the etymology of Maccaronick verses,° from Maccaroni; but maccaroni being the most ordinary and simple food, he was at a loss; "for Maccaronick verses are verses made out of a mixture of different languages, that is, of one language with the termination of another." It is particularly droll in Low Dutch. The "*Polemo-middinia*" of Drummond, of Hawthornden, in which there is a jumble of many languages moulded, as if it were all in Latin, is well known. Mr. Langton made us laugh heartily at one in the Grecian mould, in which are to be found such comical *Anglo-hellenisms* as Κλύββοισιν ἔβανχθεν: they were banged with clubs.

MR. ORME. "I do not care on what subject Johnson talks; but I love better to hear him talk than any body. He either gives you new thoughts, or a new colouring. It is a shame to the nation that he has not been more liberally rewarded. Had I been George the Third, I would have given Johnson three hundred a year for his 'Taxation no Tyranny,' alone." I repeated this, and Johnson was much pleased with such praise from such a man as Orme.

At Mr. Dilly's to-day were Mrs. Knowles, the ingenious Quaker lady, Miss Seward, the poetess of Lichfield, the Reverend Dr. Mayo, and the Rev. Mr. Beresford, Tutor to

the Duke of Bedford. Before dinner Dr. Johnson seized upon Mr. Charles Sheridan's "Account of the late Revolution in Sweden," and seemed to read it ravenously, as if he devoured it, which was to all appearance his method of studying. "He knows how to read better than any one (said Mrs. Knowles); he gets at the substance of a book directly; he tears out the heart of it." He kept it wrapt up in the table-cloth in his lap during the time of dinner, from an avidity to have one entertainment in readiness, when he should have finished another; resembling (if I may use so coarse a simile) a dog who holds a bone in his paws in reserve, while he eats something else which has been thrown to him.

The subject of cookery having been very naturally introduced at a table where Johnson, who boasted of the niceness of his palate, owned that "he always found a good dinner," he said, "I could write a better book of cookery than has ever yet been written; it should be a book upon philosophical principles. Pharmacy is now made much more simple. Cookery may be made so too. Then, as you cannot make bad meat good, I would tell what is the best butcher's meat, the best beef, the best pieces; how to choose young fowls; the proper seasons of different vegetables; and then how to roast and boil and compound." DILLY. "Mrs. Glasse's 'Cookery,' which is the best, was written by Dr. Hill. Half the *trade* know this." JOHNSON. "Well, Sir. This shews how much better the subject of Cookery may be treated by a philosopher. But you shall see what a Book of Cookery I shall make! I shall agree with Mr. Dilly for the copy-right." MISS SEWARD. "That would be Hercules with the distaff indeed." JOHNSON. "No, Madam. Women can spin very well; but they cannot make a good book of Cookery."

Mrs. Knowles affected to complain that men had much more liberty allowed them than women. JOHNSON. "Why, Madam, women have all the liberty they should wish to have. We have all the labour and the danger, and the women all the advantage. We go to sea, we build houses, we do every thing, in short, to pay our court to the women." MRS. KNOWLES.

"The Doctor reasons very wittily, but not convincingly. Now, take the instance of building; the mason's wife, if she is ever seen in liquor, is ruined; the mason may get himself drunk as often as he pleases, with little loss of character; nay, may let his wife and children starve." JOHNSON. "Madam, you must consider, if the mason does get himself drunk, and let his wife and children starve, the parish will oblige him to find security for their maintenance. We have different modes of restraining evil. Stocks for the men, a ducking-stool for women, and a pound for beasts. If we require more perfection from women than from ourselves, it is doing them honour. And women have not the same temptations that we have; they may always live in virtuous company; men must live in the world indiscriminately. If a woman has no inclination to do what is wrong, being secured from it is no restraint to her. I am at liberty to walk into the Thames; but if I were to try it, my friends would restrain me in Bedlam, and I should be obliged to them." MRS. KNOWLES. "Still, Doctor, I cannot help thinking it a hardship that more indulgence is allowed to men than to women. It gives a superiority to men, to which I do not see how they are entitled." JOHNSON. "It is plain, Madam, one or other must have the superiority. As Shakspeare says, 'If two men ride on a horse, one must ride behind.'" DILLY. "I suppose, Sir, Mrs. Knowles would have them ride in panniers, one on each side." JOHNSON. "Then, Sir, the horse would throw them both." MRS. KNOWLES. "Well, I hope that in another world the sexes will be equal." BOSWELL. "That is being too ambitious, Madam. We might as well desire to be equal with the angels. A worthy carman will get to heaven as well as Sir Isaac Newton. Yet, though equally good, they will not have the same degrees of happiness."

JOHNSON. "All friendship is preferring the interest of a friend, to the neglect, or, perhaps, against the interests of others; so that an old Greek said, 'He that has *friends* has *no friend*.' Now Christianity recommends universal benevolence, —to consider all men as our brethren; which is contrary to the

virtue of friendship, as described by the ancient philosophers. Surely, Madam, your sect must approve of this; for, you call all men *friends*." MRS. KNOWLES. "We are commanded to do good to all men, 'but especially to them who are of the household of Faith.'" JOHNSON. "Well, Madam, the household of Faith is wide enough." MRS. KNOWLES. "But, Doctor, our Saviour had twelve Apostles, yet John was called 'the disciple whom JESUS loved.'" JOHNSON. (with eyes sparkling benignantly) "Very well, indeed, Madam. You have said very well." BOSWELL. "A fine application. Pray, Sir, had you ever thought of it?" JOHNSON. "I had not, Sir."

From this pleasing subject he made a sudden transition. "I am willing to love all mankind, *except an American*:" and his inflammable corruption bursting into horrid fire, he "breathed out threatenings and slaughter;" calling them "Rascals — Robbers — Pirates;" and exclaiming, he'd "burn and destroy them." Miss Seward, looking to him with mild, but steady astonishment, said, "Sir, this is an instance that we are always most violent against those whom we have injured." — He was irritated still more by this delicate and keen reproach; and roared out another tremendous volley which one might fancy could be heard across the Atlantick.

DR. MAYO, (to Dr. Johnson.) "Pray, Sir, have you read Edwards, of New England, on Grace?" JOHNSON. "No, Sir." BOSWELL. "It puzzled me so much as to the freedom of the human will, by stating, with wonderful acute ingenuity, our being actuated by a series of motives which we cannot resist, that the only relief I had was to forget it. The argument for the moral necessity of human actions is always, I observe, fortified by supposing universal prescience to be one of the attributes of the Deity." JOHNSON. "You are surer that you are free, than you are of prescience: you are surer that you can lift up your finger or not as you please, than you are of any conclusion from a deduction of reasoning. But let us consider a little the objection from prescience. It is certain I am either to go home to-night or

not; that does not prevent my freedom. If I am well acquainted with a man, I can judge with great probability how he will act in any case, without his being restrained by my judging. God may have this probability increased to certainty." BOSWELL. "When it is increased to *certainty*, freedom ceases." JOHNSON. "All theory is against the freedom of the will; all experience for it."

He, as usual, defended luxury. Miss Seward asked if this was not Mandeville's doctrine of "private vices publick benefits." JOHNSON. "The fallacy of that book is, that Mandeville defines neither vices nor benefits. He reckons among vices every thing that gives pleasure. He takes the narrowest system of morality, monastick morality, which holds pleasure itself to be a vice, such as eating salt with our fish; and he reckons wealth as a publick benefit, which is by no means always true. Pleasure of itself is not a vice. The happiness of Heaven will be, that pleasure and virtue will be perfectly consistent. Mandeville puts the case of a man who gets drunk at an alehouse; and says it is a public benefit, because so much money is got by it to the publick. But it must be considered, that all the good gained by this, through the gradation of alehouse-keeper, brewer, maltster, and farmer, is overbalanced by the evil caused to the man and his family by his getting drunk. This is the way to try what is vicious, by ascertaining whether more evil than good is produced upon the whole, which is the case in all vice. No, it is clear that the happiness of society depends on virtue. In Sparta, theft was allowed by general consent; theft, therefore, was *there* not a crime, but then there was no security; and what a life must they have had when there was no security. Without truth there must be a dissolution of society. As it is, there is so little truth, that we are almost afraid to trust our ears; but how should we be, if falsehood were multiplied ten times! Society is held together by communication and information; and I remember this remark of Sir Thomas Brown's, 'Do the devils lie? No; for then Hell could not subsist.'"

Talking of Miss Hannah Moore, a literary lady, he said, "I was obliged to speak to Miss Reynolds, to let her know that I desired she would not flatter me so much. Why should she flatter *me?* I can do nothing for her. Let her carry her praise to a better market. (Then turning to Mrs. Knowles.) You, Madam, have been flattering me all the evening; I wish you would give Boswell a little now. If you knew his merit as well as I do, you would say a great deal; he is the best travelling companion in the world."

I expressed a horrour at the thought of death. MRS. KNOWLES. "Nay, thou should'st not have a horrour for what is the gate of life." JOHNSON. (standing upon the hearth rolling about, with a serious, solemn, and somewhat gloomy air:) "No rational man can die without uneasy apprehension." MRS. KNOWLES. "The Scriptures tell us, 'The righteous shall have *hope* in his death.'" JOHNSON. "Yes, Madam: that is, he shall not have despair." MISS SEWARD. "There is one mode of the fear of death, which is certainly absurd: and that is the dread of annihilation, which is only a pleasing sleep without a dream." JOHNSON. "It is neither pleasing, nor sleep; it is nothing. Now mere existence is so much better than nothing, that one would rather exist even in pain, than not exist. The lady confounds annihilation, which is nothing, with the apprehension of it, which is dreadful."

Of John Wesley, he said, "He can talk well on any subject." BOSWELL. "Pray, Sir, what has he made of his story of a ghost?" JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, he believes it; but not on sufficient authority. He did not take time enough to examine the girl. It was at Newcastle, where the ghost was said to have appeared to a young woman several times, mentioning something about the right to an old house, advising application to be made to an attorney, which was done; and, at the same time, saying the attorney would do nothing, which proved to be the fact. 'This (says John,) is a proof that the ghost knows our thoughts.' Now (laughing,) it is not necessary to know our thoughts, to tell that an attorney will

sometimes do nothing. Charles Wesley, who is a more stationary man, does not believe the story. I am sorry that John did not take more pains to enquire into the evidence for it." MISS SEWARD, (with an incredulous smile:) "What, Sir! about a ghost?" JOHNSON, (with solemn vehemence:) "Yes, Madam: this is a question, which, after five thousand years, is yet undecided; a question, whether in theology or philosophy, one of the most important that can come before the human understanding."

Mrs. Knowles mentioned, as proselyte to Quakerism, Miss Jenny Harry, a young lady well known to Dr. Johnson, for whom he had shewn much affection; and, in the gentlest and most persuasive manner, solicited his kind indulgence for what was sincerely a matter of conscience. JOHNSON, (frowning very angrily,) "Madam, she is an odious wench. She could not have any proper conviction that it was her duty to change her religion, which should be studied with all care. She knew no more of the Church which she left, and that which she embraced, than she did of the difference between the Copernican and Ptolemaick systems." MRS. KNOWLES. "She had the New Testament before her." JOHNSON. "Madam, she could not understand the New Testament, the most difficult book in the world, for which the study of a life is required." MRS. KNOWLES. "It is clear as to essentials." JOHNSON. "But not as to controversial points."

Notwithstanding occasional explosions of violence, we were all delighted upon the whole with Johnson. I compared him at this time to a warm West-Indian climate, where you have a bright sun, quick vegetation, luxuriant foliage, luscious fruits; but where the same heat sometimes produces thunder, lightning, and earthquakes, in a terrible degree.

Good-Friday, I waited on Johnson, as usual. Although it was a part of his abstemious discipline on this most solemn fast, to take no milk in his tea, yet when Mrs. Desmoulins inadvertently poured it in, he did not reject it. JOHNSON. "Sir, I am in the habit of getting others to do things for me.

But I always think afterwards I should have done better for myself."

I told him that at a gentleman's house where there was thought to be extravagance, his lady had objected to the cutting of a pickled mango, the price of it only two shillings. JOHNSON. "Sir, that is the blundering œconomy of a narrow understanding. It is stopping one hole in a sieve."

I expressed some inclination to publish an account of my *Travels* upon the continent. "I can give an entertaining narrative, with many incidents, anecdotes, *jeux d'esprit*." JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, most modern travellers in Europe who have published their travels, have been laughed at: I would not have you added to the number. Now some of my friends asked me, why I did not give some account of my travels in France. The reason is plain; intelligent readers had seen more of France than I had. *You* might have liked my travels in France, and THE CLUB might have liked them: but, upon the whole, there would have been more ridicule than good produced by them." BOSWELL. "Sir, to talk to you in your own style (raising my voice, and shaking my head,) you *should* have given us your travels in France. I am *sure* I am right, and *there's an end on't*." JOHNSON. "Books of travels will be good in proportion to what a man has previously in his mind; his knowing what to observe; his power of contrasting one mode of life with another. As the Spanish proverb says, 'He, who would bring home the wealth of the Indies, must carry the wealth of the Indies with him.'"

It was a delightful day: as we walked to St. Clement's church, I again remarked that Fleet-street was the most cheerful scene in the world. "Fleet-street (said I,) is in my mind more delightful than Tempé." JOHNSON. "Ay, Sir: but let it be compared with Mull."

He has made the following minute on this day: "In my return from church, I was accosted by Edwards, an old fellow-collegian, who had not seen me since 1729. My purpose is to continue our acquaintance." It was in Butcher-row that this meeting happened. Mr. Edwards, who was a decent-

looking elderly man in grey clothes, and a wig of many curls, brought to his recollection their having been at Pembroke-College together nine-and-forty years ago. Johnson seemed much pleased, asked where he lived, and said he should be glad to see him in Bolt-court. So Edwards walked along with us. Mr. Edwards expatiated on the pleasure of living in the country. "I see my grass, and my corn, and my trees growing. Now, for instance, I am curious to see if this frost has not nipped my fruit-trees." Johnson. "You find, Sir, you have fears as well as hopes." — So well did he see the whole, when another saw but the half of a subject.

When we got to Dr. Johnson's house, and were seated in his library, the dialogue went on admirably. Edwards. "Sir, I remember you would not let us say *prodigious* at College. For even then, Sir, (turning to me,) he was delicate in language, and we all feared him." Johnson, (to Edwards:) "From your having practised the law long, Sir, I presume you must be rich." Edwards. "No, Sir; I got a good deal of money; but I had a number of poor relations to whom I gave a great part of it." Johnson. "Sir, you have been rich in the most valuable sense of the word." Edwards. "But I shall not die rich." Johnson. "Nay, sure, Sir, it is better to *live* rich, than to *die* rich." Edwards. "I wish I had continued at College. I should have been a parson, and had a good living." Johnson. "Sir, the life of a parson, of a conscientious clergyman, is not easy. I have always considered a clergyman as the father of a larger family than he is able to maintain. I would rather have Chancery suits upon my hands than the cure of souls. No, Sir, I do not envy a clergyman's life as an easy life, nor do I envy the clergyman who makes it an easy life." — Here taking himself up all of a sudden, he exclaimed, "O! Mr. Edwards! I'll convince you that I recollect you. Do you remember our drinking together at an alehouse near Pembroke gate? At that time, you told me of the Eton boy, who, when verses on our Saviour's turning water into wine were prescribed as an exercise, brought up a single line, which was highly admired:

'Vidit et erubuit ° lympha pudica DEUM.'

and I told you of another fine line in 'Camden's Remains,' an eulogy upon one of our Kings, who was succeeded by his son, a prince of equal merit:

'Mira cano, Sol occubuit, nox nulla secuta est.'"

EDWARDS. "You are a philosopher, Dr. Johnson. I have tried too in my time to be a philosopher: but, I don't know how, cheerfulness was always breaking in." Mr. Burke, Sir Joshua Reynolds, indeed, all the eminent men to whom I have mentioned this, have thought it an exquisite trait of character.

EDWARDS. "I have been twice married, Doctor. You, I suppose, have never known what it was to have a wife." JOHNSON. "Sir, I have known what it was to have a wife, and (in a solemn tender faltering tone) I have known what it was to *lose a wife*. — It had almost broke my heart."

EDWARDS. "How do you live, Sir? For my part, I must have my regular meals, and a glass of good wine. I find I require it." JOHNSON. "I now drink no wine, Sir. And as to regular meals, I have fasted from the Sunday's dinner to the Tuesday's dinner, without any inconvenience. I believe it is best to eat just as one is hungry. I am a straggler. I may leave this town and go to Grand Cairo, without being missed here or observed there." EDWARDS. "Don't you eat supper, Sir?" JOHNSON. "No, Sir." EDWARDS. "For my part, now, I consider supper as a turnpike through which one must pass, in order to get to bed. I am grown old: I am sixty-five." JOHNSON. "I shall be sixty-eight next birthday. Come, Sir, drink water, and put in for a hundred."

Mr. Edwards mentioned a gentleman who had left his whole fortune to Pembroke College. JOHNSON. "I would leave the interest of the fortune I bequeathed to a College to my relations or my friends, for their lives. It is the same thing to a College, which is a permanent society, whether it gets the

money now or twenty years hence; and I would wish to make my relations or friends feel the benefit of it."

He observed, "how wonderful it was that they had both been in London forty years, without having ever once met, and both walkers in the street too!" When he was gone, I said to Johnson, I thought him but a weak man. JOHNSON. "Why, yes, Sir. Here is a man who has passed through life without experience: yet I would rather have him with me than a more sensible man who will not talk readily. This man is always willing to say what he has to say." Yet Dr. Johnson had himself by no means that willingness which he praised so justly.

Johnson once observed to me, "Tom Tyers described me the best: 'Sir, (said he,) you are like a ghost; you never speak till you are spoken to.'"

The gentleman was the son of Mr. Jonathan Tyers, the founder of Vauxhall Gardens, peculiarly adapted to the taste of the English nation; there being a mixture of curious shew, — gay exhibition, — musick, vocal and instrumental, not too refined for the general ear; — for all which only a shilling is paid; and, though last, not least, good eating and drinking for those who choose to purchase that regale.

JOHNSON. "Sir, it *would* have been better that I had been of a profession. I ought to have been a lawyer." BOSWELL. "We should not have had the English Dictionary."

Sir William Scott said to Johnson, "What a pity it is, Sir, that you did not follow the profession of the law. You might have been Lord Chancellor of Great Britain, and attained to the dignity of the peerage; and now that the title of Lichfield, your native city, is extinct, you might have had it." Johnson, upon this, seemed much agitated; and, in an angry tone, exclaimed, "Why will you vex me by suggesting this, when it is too late?"

But he did not repine at the prosperity of others. When Mr. Edmund Burke shewed Johnson his fine house and lands near Beaconsfield, Johnson coolly said, "*Non equidem invideo; miror magis.*"

He told Sir Joshua Reynolds, that once when he dined in a numerous company of booksellers, the head of the table, at which he sat, being almost close to the fire, he persevered in suffering a great deal of inconvenience from the heat, rather than quit his place, and let one of them sit above him.

Goldsmith, in his diverting simplicity, complained one day of Lord Camden. "He took no more notice of me than if I had been an ordinary man." The company having laughed heartily, Johnson stood forth in defence of his friend. "Nay, Gentlemen, a nobleman ought to have made up to such a man as Goldsmith."

Garrick, who was very vain of his intimacy with Lord Camden, accosted me thus: — "Pray now, did you — did you meet a little lawyer turning the corner, eh?" — "No, Sir (said I). Pray what do you mean by the question?" — "Why, (replied Garrick, with an affected indifference, yet as if standing on tip-toe,) Lord Camden has this moment left me. We have had a long walk together." JOHNSON. "Well, Sir, Garrick talked very properly. Lord Camden *was a little lawyer* to be associating so familiarly with a player."

Sir Joshua Reynolds observed, that Johnson considered Garrick to be as it were his *property*. He would allow no man either to blame or to praise Garrick in his presence, without contradicting him.

He would not even look at the proof-sheet of his "Life of Waller" on Good Friday.

JOHNSON. "Indeed I never sought much after any body." BOSWELL. "Lord Orrery, I suppose." JOHNSON. "No, Sir: I never went to him but when he sent for me." BOSWELL. "Richardson?" JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir. But I sought after George Psalmanazar° the most. I used to go and sit with him at an alehouse in the city."

I observed, that the pillory does not always disgrace. And I mentioned an instance of a gentleman, who I thought was not dishonoured by it. JOHNSON. "Ay, but he was, Sir. He could not mouth and strut as he used to do, after

having been there. People are not willing to ask a man to their tables who has stood in the pillory."

Johnson attacked the Americans with intemperate vehemence of abuse. I said something in their favour; and added, that I was always sorry, when he talked on that subject. This, it seems, exasperated him. The cloud was charged with sulphureous vapour, which was afterwards to burst in thunder. — We talked of a gentleman who was running out his fortune in London; I said, "We must get him out of it. All his friends must quarrel with him, and that will soon drive him away." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, we'll send *you* to him. If your company does not drive a man out of his house, nothing will." This was a horrible shock, for which there was no visible cause. I afterwards asked him, why he had said so harsh a thing. JOHNSON. "Because, Sir, you made me angry about the Americans." BOSWELL. "But why did you not take your revenge directly?" JOHNSON. (smiling) "Because, Sir, I had nothing ready. A man cannot strike till he has his weapons."

He shewed me to-night his drawing-room, very genteelly fitted up: and said, "Mrs. Thrale sneered, when I talked of my having asked you and your lady to live at my house. I was obliged to tell her, that you would be in as respectable a situation in my house as in hers. Sir, the insolence of wealth will creep out." BOSWELL. "She has a little both of the insolence of wealth, and the conceit of parts." JOHNSON. "The insolence of wealth is a wretched thing; but the conceit of parts has some foundation. To be sure, it should not be. But who is without it?" BOSWELL. "Yourself, Sir." JOHNSON. "Why, I play no tricks: I lay no traps." BOSWELL. "No, Sir. You are six feet high, and you only do not stoop."

I mentioned that there were a hundred in the family of the present Earl of Eglintoune's father. Dr. Johnson seeming to doubt it, I began to enumerate. "Let us see: my Lord and my Lady two." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, if you are to count by twos, you may be long enough." BOSWELL.

"Well, but now I add two sons and seven daughters, and a servant for each, that will make twenty: so we have the fifth part already." JOHNSON. "Very true. You get at twenty pretty readily; but you will not so easily get further on. We grow to five feet pretty readily; but it is not so easy to grow to seven."

I expressed a wish to have the arguments for Christianity always in readiness. JOHNSON. "Sir, you cannot answer all objections. You have demonstration for a First Cause: you see he must be good as well as powerful. Yet you have against this, what is very certain, the unhappiness of human life. This, however, gives us reason to hope for a future state of compensation, that there may be a perfect system."

MUSGRAVE. "A temporary poem always entertains." JOHNSON. "So does an account of the criminals hanged yesterday entertain us."

He proceeded: — "Demosthenes Taylor, as he was called, (that is, the Editor of Demosthenes) was the most silent man, the merest statue of a man that I have ever seen. I once dined in company with him, and all he said during the whole time was no more than *Richard*."

Mrs. Cholmondeley exhibited some lively sallies of hyperbolical compliments to Johnson. He answered her somewhat in the style of the hero of a romance, "Madam, you crown me with unfading laurels."

JOHNSON. "A pamphlet is understood in common language to mean prose. We understand what is most general, and we name what is less frequent."

We talked of a lady's verses on Ireland. JOHNSON. "I have seen a translation from Horace, by one of her daughters." MISS REYNOLDS. "And how was it, Sir?" JOHNSON. "Why, very well for a young Miss's verses; that is to say, compared with excellence, nothing; but, very well, for the person who wrote them. I am vexed at being shewn verses in that manner." MISS REYNOLDS. "But if they should be good, why not give them hearty praise?" JOHNSON. "Why, Madam, because I have not then got the better of

my bad humour from having been shewn them. Nobody has a right to put another under such a difficulty, that he must either hurt the person by telling the truth, or hurt himself by telling what is not true. Therefore the man, who is asked by an authour what he thinks of his work, is put to the torture, and is not obliged to speak the truth; this authour, when mankind are hunting him with a cannister at his tail, can say, 'I would not have published, had not Johnson, or Reynolds, or Musgrave, or some other good judge commended the work.' Both Goldsmith's comedies were once refused. His 'Vicar of Wakefield' I myself did not think would have had much success. It was written and sold to a bookseller, before his 'Traveller'; but published after; so little expectation had the bookseller from it. Had it been sold after the 'Traveller,' he might have had twice as much money for it, though sixty guineas was no mean price." SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS. "'The Beggar's Opera' affords a proof how strangely people will differ in opinion about a literary performance. Burke thinks it has no merit." JOHNSON. "It was refused by one of the houses; but I should have thought it would succeed, not from any great excellence in the writing, but from the novelty, and the general spirit and gaiety of the piece."

"Cave used to sell ten thousand of 'The Gentleman's Magazine'; yet such was then his minute attention and anxiety that the sale should not suffer the smallest decrease, that he would name a particular person who he heard had talked of leaving off the Magazine, and would say, 'Let us have something good next month.'"

It was observed, that avarice was inherent in some dispositions. JOHNSON. "No man was born a miser, because no man was born to possession. Every man is born *cupidus* — desirous of getting; but not *avarus* — desirous of keeping. All the world have called an avaricious man a *miser*, because he is miserable. No, Sir, a man who both spends and saves money is the happiest man, because he has both enjoyments."

The conversation having turned on *Bon-Mots*, he quoted,

from one of the *Ana*, an exquisite instance of flattery in a maid of honour in France, who being asked by the Queen what o'clock it was, answered, "What your Majesty pleases." He admitted that Mr. Burke's classical pun upon Mr. Wilkes's being carried on the shoulders of the mob,

> "—— numerisque fertur
> Lege solutus,"°

was admirable.

He observed, "A man cannot with propriety speak of himself, except he relates simple facts; he cannot be sure he is wise, or that he has any other excellence. Then, all censure of a man's self is oblique praise. It is in order to shew how much he can spare. It has all the invidiousness of self-praise, and all the reproach of falsehood."

We stopped first at the bottom of Hedge-lane, into which he went to leave a letter, "with good news for a poor man in distress," as he told me. He often resembled Lady Bolingbroke's lively description of Pope: that "he was *un politique aux choux° et aux raves*." He would say, "I dine to-day in Grosvenor-square:" this might be with a Duke; or, perhaps, "I dine to-day at the other end of the town:" or, "A gentleman of great eminence called on me yesterday." — He loved thus to keep things floating in conjecture: *Omne ignotum pro magnifico est*. We stopped again at Wirgman's, the well-known *toy-shop*, in St. James's-Street, to which he had been directed, and could not find it at first; and said, "To direct one only to a corner shop is *toying* with one," a play upon the word *toy;* the first time that I knew him stoop to such sport. He sent for me to come out of the coach, and help him to choose a pair of silver buckles, as those he had were too small. Probably this alteration in dress had been suggested by Mrs. Thrale, by associating with whom, his external appearance was much improved. He got better cloaths; and the dark colour, from which he never deviated, was enlivened by metal buttons. His wigs, too, were much better; and during their travels in France, he was furnished with a Paris-made wig, of handsome construction. This

choosing of silver buckles was a negociation: "Sir, (said he,) I will not have the ridiculous large ones now in fashion; and I will give no more than a guinea for a pair." BOSWELL. "I was this morning in Ridley's shop, Sir; and was told, that the collection called *Johnsoniana* has sold very much." JOHNSON. "Yet the 'Journey to the Hebrides' has not had a great sale." BOSWELL. "That is strange." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir; for in that book I have told the world a great deal that they did not know before."

BOSWELL. "I drank chocolate, Sir, this morning with Mr. Eld; and, to my no small surprize, found him to be a *Staffordshire Whig*, a being which I did not believe had existed." JOHNSON. "Sir, there are rascals in all countries. I have always said, the first Whig was the Devil." BOSWELL. "He certainly was, Sir. The Devil was impatient of subordination; he was the first who resisted power:

'Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heaven.'"

JOHNSON. "Mutual cowardice keeps us in peace. Were one-half of mankind brave, and one-half cowards, the brave would be always beating the cowards. Were all brave, they would lead a very uneasy life; all would be continually fighting: but being all cowards, we go on very well."

"Wine makes a man better pleased with himself. I do not say that it makes him more pleasing to others. Sometimes it does. But the danger is, that while a man grows better pleased with himself, he may be growing less pleasing to others. Nay, Sir, conversation is the key: wine is a pick-lock, which forces open the box, and injures it." BOSWELL. "The great difficulty of resisting wine is from benevolence. For instance, a good worthy man asks you to taste his wine, which he has had twenty years in his cellar." JOHNSON. "Sir, all this notion about benevolence arises from a man's imagining himself to be of more importance to others, than he really is. And as for the good worthy man; how do you know he is good and worthy? No good and worthy man will insist upon another man's drinking wine.

As to the wine twenty years in the cellar, — of ten men, three say this, merely because they must say something; three are telling a lie, when they say they have had the wine twenty years; — three would rather save the wine; - one, perhaps, cares: but yet we must do justice to wine; we must allow it the power it possesses. To make a man pleased with himself, let me tell you, is doing a very great thing." SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS. "But to please one's company is a strong motive." JOHNSON. (who, from drinking only water, supposed every body who drank wine to be elevated.) "I won't argue any more with you, Sir. You are too far gone." SIR JOSHUA. "I should have thought so indeed, Sir, had I made such a speech as you have now done." JOHNSON. (drawing himself in, and, I really thought blushing,) "Nay, don't be angry. I did not mean to offend you." SIR JOSHUA. "The pleasure of drinking wine is so connected with pleasing your company, that altogether there is something of social goodness in it." JOHNSON. "Sir, this is only saying the same thing over again." SIR JOSHUA. "No, this is new." JOHNSON. "You put it in new words, but it is an old thought. This is one of the disadvantages of wine, it makes a man mistake words for thoughts." BOSWELL. "I think it is a new thought; at least, it is in a new *attitude*." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, it is only in a new coat; or an old coat with a new facing. (Then laughing heartily.) It is the old dog in a new doublet. — An extraordinary instance, however, may occur where a man's patron will do nothing for him, unless he will drink; *there* may be a good reason for drinking." I mentioned a nobleman, who was really uneasy, if his company would not drink hard. "Supposing I should be *tête-à-tête* with him at table." JOHNSON. "Sir, there is no more reason for your drinking with *him*, than his being sober with *you*."

General Paoli said he did not imagine Homer's poetry was so ancient as is supposed, because he ascribes to a Greek colony ° circumstances of refinement not found in Greece itself at a later period, when Thucydides wrote. JOHNSON. "I am for the antiquity of Homer, and think that a Grecian

colony by being nearer Persia might be more refined than the mother country."

I dined with him at Mr. Allan Ramsay's. Before Johnson came we talked a good deal of him. I said I worshipped him. ROBERTSON. "But some of you spoil him: you should not worship him; you should worship no man." BOSWELL. "I cannot help worshipping him, he is so much superiour to other men." ROBERTSON. "In criticism, and in wit and conversation, he is no doubt very excellent; but in other respects he is not above other men; he will believe any thing, and will strenuously defend the most minute circumstance connected with the Church of England." No sooner did he, of whom we had been thus talking so easily, arrive, than we were all as quiet as a school upon the entrance of the head-master.

RAMSAY. "I suppose Homer's 'Iliad' to be a collection of pieces which had been written before his time. I should like to see a translation of it in poetical prose," like the book of Ruth or Job." ROBERTSON. "Would you, Dr. Johnson, who are master of the English language, but try your hand upon a part of it." JOHNSON. "Sir, you could not read it without the pleasure of verse."

Dr. Robertson expatiated on the character of a certain nobleman; that he would sit in company quite sluggish, while there was nothing to call forth his intellectual vigour; but the moment that any important subject was started, he would shew his extraordinary talents with the most powerful ability and animation. JOHNSON. "Yet this man cut his own throat. The true strong and sound mind is the mind that can embrace equally great things and small. Now I am told the King of Prussia will say to a servant, 'Bring me a bottle of such a wine, which came in such a year; it lies in such a corner of the cellars.' I would have a man great in great things, and elegant in little things." He said to me afterwards, when we were by ourselves, "Robertson was in a mighty romantick humour, he talked of one he did not know, but I *downed* him with the King of Prussia." — "Yes, Sir, (said I,) you threw a *bottle* at his head."

Next day, Thursday, April 30, I found him at home by himself. JOHNSON. "Well, Sir, Ramsay gave us a splendid dinner. I love Ramsay. You will not find a man in whose conversation there is more instruction, more information, and more elegance, than in Ramsay's." BOSWELL. "What I admire in Ramsay, is his continuing to be so young." JOHNSON. "Why, yes, Sir; it is to be admired. I value myself upon this, that there is nothing of the old man in my conversation. I am now sixty-eight, and I have no more of it than at twenty-eight." BOSWELL. "But, Sir, would not you wish to know old age? I mean, Sir, the Sphinx's description of it;—morning, noon, and night. I would know night, as well as morning and noon." JOHNSON. "What, Sir, would you know what it is to feel the evils of old age? Would you have the gout? Would you have decrepitude?"—Seeing him heated, I would not argue any farther. JOHNSON. "Mrs. Thrale's mother said of me what flattered me much. A clergyman was complaining of want of society in the country where he lived; and said, 'They talk of *runts*' (that is, young cows). 'Sir, (said Mrs. Salusbury,) Mr. Johnson would learn to talk of runts:' meaning that I was a man who would make the most of my situation, whatever it was." He added, "I think myself a very polite man."

There were several people at Sir Joshua Reynolds's by no means of the Johnsonian school; so that less attention was paid to him than usual, which put him out of humour; and upon some imaginary offence from me, he attacked me with such rudeness, that I was vexed and angry, because it gave those persons an opportunity of enlarging upon his supposed ferocity, and ill-treatment of his best friends. I was so much hurt, and had my pride so much roused, that I kept away from him for a week; and perhaps, might have kept away much longer, nay, gone to Scotland without seeing him again, had not we fortunately met and been reconciled.

When we were by ourselves, he drew his chair near to mine, and said in a tone of conciliating courtesy, "Well, how have you done?" BOSWELL. "Sir, you have made me very

uneasy by your behaviour to me when we last were at Sir Joshua Reynolds's. You know, my dear Sir, no man has a greater respect and affection for you, or would sooner go to the end of the world to serve you. Now to treat me so —" He insisted that I had interrupted him, which I assured him was not the case; and proceeded — "But why treat me so before people who neither love you nor me?" JOHNSON. "Well, I am sorry for it. I'll make it up to you twenty different ways, as you please." BOSWELL. "I said to-day to Sir Joshua, when he observed that you *tossed* me sometimes — I don't care how often, or how high he tosses me, when only friends are present, for then I fall upon soft ground: but I do not like falling on stones, which is the case when enemies are present. — I think this a pretty good image, Sir." JOHNSON. "Sir, it is one of the happiest I have ever heard."

BOSWELL. "Do you think, Sir, it is always culpable to laugh at a man to his face?" JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, that depends upon the man and the thing. If it is a slight man, and a slight thing, you may; for you take nothing valuable from him."

Mr. Langton having repeated the anecdote of Addison having distinguished between his powers in conversation and in writing, by saying "I have only nine-pence in my pocket; but I can draw for a thousand pounds;" — JOHNSON. "He had not that retort ready, Sir; he had prepared it beforehand." LANGTON: (turning to me.) "A fine surmise. Set a thief to catch a thief."

Johnson called the East-Indians barbarians. BOSWELL. "You will except the Chinese, Sir?" JOHNSON. "No, Sir." BOSWELL. "Have they not arts?" JOHNSON. "They have pottery. Sir, they have not an alphabet. They have not been able to form what all other nations have formed. Their language is only more difficult from its rudeness: as there is more labour in hewing down a tree with a stone than with an axe."

JOHNSON. "Lord Kames, in treating of severity of punishment, mentions that of Madame Lapoukin, in Russia, but

he does not give it fairly. He stops where it is said that the spectators thought her innocent, and leaves out what follows: that she nevertheless was guilty. Now this is being as culpable as one can conceive, to misrepresent fact in a book, and for what motive? It is like one of those lies which people tell, one cannot see why. The woman's life was spared: and no punishment was too great for the favourite of an Empress who had conspired to dethrone her mistress." BOSWELL. "He was only giving a picture of the lady in her sufferings." JOHNSON. "Nay, don't endeavour to palliate this. Guilt is a principal feature in the picture. Kames is puzzled with a question that puzzled me when I was a very young man. Why is it that the interest of money is lower, when money is plentiful? A lady explained it to me. 'It is (said she) because when money is plentiful there are so many more who have money to lend, that they bid down one another.'" BOSWELL. "This must have been an extraordinary lady who instructed you, Sir. May I ask who she was?" JOHNSON. "Molly Aston, Sir, the sister of those ladies with whom you dined at Lichfield. — I shall be at home to-morrow." BOSWELL. "Then let us dine by ourselves at the Mitre, to keep up the old custom, 'the custom of the manor,' custom of the Mitre." JOHNSON. "Sir, so it shall be."

There was, on these occasions, a little circumstance of kind attention to Mrs. Williams, which must not be omitted. Before coming out, and leaving her to dine alone, he gave her her choice of a chicken, a sweetbread, or any other little nice thing, which was carefully sent to her from the tavern ready dressed.

He expressed much wonder at the curious formation of the bat, a mouse with wings; saying, that it was almost as strange a thing in physiology, as if the fabulous dragon could be seen.

I mentioned Lord Marchmont as one who could tell him a great deal about Pope, — "Sir, he will tell *me* nothing." I had the honour of being known to his Lordship, and applied to him, of myself, without being commissioned by Johnson.

His Lordship however asked, "Will he write the Lives of the Poets impartially? He was the first that brought Whig and Tory into a Dictionary. And what do you think of his definition of Excise? Do you know the history of his aversion to the word *transpire?*" Then taking down the folio Dictionary: "To escape from secrecy to notice; a sense lately innovated from France, without necessity." The truth was, Lord Bolingbroke, who left the Jacobites, first used it; therefore, it was to be condemned. I afterwards put the question to Johnson: "Why, Sir, (said he,) *get abroad.*" Boswell. "That, Sir, is using two words." Johnson. "Sir, there is no end of this. You may as well insist to have a word for old age." Boswell. "Well, Sir, *Senectus.*" Johnson. "Nay, Sir, to insist always that there should be one word to express a thing in English, because there is one in another language, is to change the language."

I proposed to Lord Marchmont, that he should revise Johnson's Life of Pope: "So (said his Lordship,) you would put me in a dangerous situation. You know he knocked down Osborne, the bookseller."

I hastened down to Mr. Thrale's at Streatham, where he now was, that I might ensure his being at home next day; and after dinner, when I thought he would receive the good news in the best humour, I announced it eagerly: "I have been at work for you to-day, Sir. I have been with Lord Marchmont. He bade me tell you, he has a great respect for you, and will call on you to-morrow, at one o'clock, and communicate all he knows about Pope."—Here I paused, in full expectation that he would be pleased. Johnson. "I shall not be in town to-morrow. I don't care to know about Pope." Mrs. Thrale: (surprised as I was, and a little angry.) "I suppose, Sir, Mr. Boswell thought, that as you are to write Pope's Life, you would wish to know about him." Johnson. "Wish! why yes. If it rained knowledge, I'd hold out my hand; but I would not give myself the trouble to go in quest of it." There was no arguing with him at the moment. Some time afterwards he

said. "Lord Marchmont will call on me, and then I shall call on Lord Marchmont." Mrs. Thrale was uneasy at his unaccountable caprice; and told me, that if I did not take care to bring about a meeting between Lord Marchmont and him, it would never take place. But it must not be erroneously supposed that he was generally thus peevish. It will be seen that in the following year he had a very agreeable interview with Lord Marchmont, at his Lordship's house.

Mrs. Thrale told us, that Pope had originally in his "Universal Prayer,"

> "Can sins of moment claim the rod
> Of everlasting fires?
> And that offend great Nature's GOD,
> Which Nature's self inspires?"

and Dr. Johnson observed, "it had been borrowed from *Guarini*." MRS. THRALE. "'Sins of *moment*' is a faulty expression: for its true import is *momentous*, which cannot be intended." JOHNSON. "It must have been written 'of *moments*.' Of *moment*, is *momentous*: of *moments*, *momentary*. I warrant you, however, Pope wrote this stanza, and some friend struck it out. Boileau wrote some such thing, and Arnaud struck it out, saying, '*Vous gagnerez deux ou trois impies, et perdrez je ne scais combien des honnêtes gens.*' These fellows want to say a daring thing, and don't know how to go about it. Mere poets know no more of fundamental principles than —." Here he was interrupted somehow. Mrs. Thrale mentioned Dryden. JOHNSON. "He puzzled himself about predestination. How foolish was it in Pope to give all his friendship to lords, who thought they honoured him by being with him."

He said of one of our friends, "He is ruining himself with as little pleasure. A man who loses at play, or who runs out his fortune at court, makes his estate less, in hopes of making it bigger: (I am sure of this word, which was often used by him:) but it is a sad thing to pass through the quagmire of parsimony, to the gulph of ruin. To pass over the flowery path of extravagance, is very well."

Amongst the numerous prints pasted on the walls of the dining-room at Streatham, was Hogarth's "Modern Midnight Conversation." I asked him what he knew of Parson Ford, who makes a conspicuous figure in the riotous group. JOHNSON. "Sir, he was my acquaintance and relation, my mother's nephew. BOSWELL. "Was there not a story of his ghost having appeared?" JOHNSON. "Sir, it was believed. A waiter at the Hummums,° in which house Ford died, had been absent for some time, and returned, not knowing that Ford was dead. Going down to the cellar, according to the story, he met him; going down again, he met him a second time. When he came up he asked some of the people of the house what Ford could be doing there. They told him Ford was dead. The waiter took a fever, in which he lay for some time. When he recovered, he said he had a message to deliver to some women from Ford; but he was not to tell what, or to whom. He walked out; he was followed; but somewhere about St. Paul's they lost him. He came back, and said he had delivered the message, and the women exclaimed, 'Then we are all undone!' If the message to the women, and their behaviour upon it, were true as related, there was something supernatural. That rests upon his word; and there it remains."

JOHNSON. "Will you not allow, Sir, that vice does not hurt a man's character so as to obstruct his prosperity in life, when you know that Clive was loaded with wealth and honours; a man who had acquired his fortune by such crimes, that his consciousness of them impelled him to cut his own throat?" BOSWELL. "Dr. Robertson said, he cut his throat because of little things not being sufficient to move his great mind." JOHNSON, (very angry.) "Nay, Sir, what stuff is this? You had no more this opinion after Robertson said it, than before. I know nothing more offensive than repeating what one knows to be foolish things, by way of continuing a dispute, to see what a man will answer, — to make him your butt!" (angrier still.) BOSWELL. "My dear Sir, I had no such intention. Might not this nobleman have felt every

thing 'weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable,' as Hamlet says?" JOHNSON. "Nay, if you are to bring in gabble, I'll talk no more. I will not, upon my honour." — My readers will decide upon this dispute.

Looking at Messrs. Dilly's splendid edition of Lord Chesterfield's miscellaneous works, he laughed, and said, "Here are now two speeches ascribed to him, both of which were written by me: and the best of it is, they have found out that one of them is like Demosthenes, and the other like Cicero."

JOHNSON. "What I gained by being in France was, learning to be better satisfied with my own country. Time may be employed to more advantage from nineteen to twenty-four, almost in any way than in travelling; but how much more would a young man improve were he to study during those years. How little does travelling supply to the conversation of any man who has travelled: how little to Beauclerk?" BOSWELL. "What say you to Lord ——?" JOHNSON. "I never but once heard him talk of what he had seen, and that was of a large serpent in one of the Pyramids of Egypt." BOSWELL. "Well, I happened to hear him tell the same thing, which made me mention him."

He was at all times watchful to suppress the vulgar cant against the manners of the great: "High people, Sir, (said he,) are the best; take a hundred ladies of quality, you'll find them better wives, better mothers, more willing to sacrifice their own pleasures to their children, than a hundred other women. Tradeswomen (I mean the wives of tradesmen in the city, who are worth from ten to fifteen thousand pounds, are the worst creatures upon the earth, grossly ignorant, and thinking viciousness fashionable."

The disaster of General Burgoyne's army was then the common topick of conversation. It was asked why piling their arms was insisted upon as a matter of such consequence, when it seemed to be a circumstance so inconsiderable in itself. JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, a French authour says, '*Il y a beaucoup de puerilités dans la guerre.*'"

He said "*Candide*" he thought had more power in it than any thing that *Voltaire* had written.

He said, "The lyrical part of Horace never can be perfectly translated."

He said, "Lord Chatham was a Dictator; he possessed the power of putting the State in motion; now there is no power, all order is relaxed. Sir, when we are weary of this relaxation the City of London will appoint its Mayors again by seniority." BOSWELL. "But is not that taking a mere chance for having a good or a bad Mayor?" JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir; but the evil of competition is greater than that of the worst Mayor that can come: besides, there is no more reason to suppose that the choice of a rabble will be right, than that chance will be right."

He gave me some salutary counsel, and recommended vigorous resolution against any deviation from moral duty. BOSWELL: "But you would not have me to bind myself by a solemn obligation?" JOHNSON. (much agitated). "What! a vow — O, no, Sir, a vow is a horrible thing, it is a snare for sin. The man who cannot go to heaven without a vow — may go —" Here, standing erect, in the middle of his library and rolling grand, his pause was truly a curious compound of the solemn and the ludicrous; he half-whistled in his usual way, when pleasant, and he paused, as if checked by religious awe. — Methought he would have added — to Hell — but was restrained. I humoured the dilemma. "What! Sir, (said I,) '*In cœlum jusseris ibit?*' alluding to his imitation of it,

'And bid him go to Hell, to Hell he goes.'"

JOHNSON "Education in England has been in danger of being hurt by two of its greatest men, Milton and Locke. Milton's plan is impracticable, and I suppose has never been tried. Locke's gives too much to one side, and too little to the other; it gives too little to literature."

Mr. Langton has been pleased, at my request, to favour me with some particulars of Dr. Johnson's visit to Warley-camp.

"He sate, with a patient degree of attention, to observe the proceedings of a regimental court-martial; and one night, as late as at eleven o'clock, he accompanied the Major of the regiment in going the *Rounds*, where he might observe the forms of visiting the guards, for seeing that they and their sentries are ready in their duty on their several posts."

To Boswell.

"If general approbation will add any thing to your enjoyment, I can tell you that I have heard *you* mentioned *as a man whom every body likes*. I think life has little more to give.

"Langton talks of making more contractions of his expence. With the common deficience of advisers, we have not shown him how to do right.

"I wish you would a little correct or restrain your imagination, and imagine that happiness, such as life admits, may be had at other places as well as London. Without asserting Stoicism, it may be said, that it is our business to exempt ourselves as much as we can from the power of external things. There is but one solid basis of happiness: and that is, the reasonable hope of a happy futurity. This may be had everywhere.

"Mrs. Thrale, poor thing, has a daughter. Mr. Thrale dislikes the times, like the rest of us. Mrs. Williams is sick; Mrs. Desmoulins is poor. I have miserable nights. Nobody is well but Mr. Levett. Sam. Johnson."

He has sometimes suffered me to talk jocularly of his group of females, and call them his *Seraglio*. He thus mentions them, together with honest Levett, in one of his letters to Mrs. Thrale: "Williams hates every body; Levett hates Desmoulins, and does not love Williams; Desmoulins hates them both; Poll * loves none of them."

"The Club (he wrote me,) is to meet with the parliament; we talk of electing Banks, the traveller; he will be a reputable member."

Johnson expressed great satisfaction at the publication of the "Discourses to the Royal Academy," by Sir Joshua Rey-

nolds, whom he always considered as one of his literary school. The authour received from the Empress of Russia ° a gold snuff-box, adorned with her profile in *bas relief*, set in diamonds, and containing a slip of paper, on which are written with her Imperial Majesty's own hand, the following words: *Pour le Chevalier Reynolds en temoignage du contentement que j'ai ressentie à la lecture de ses excellens discours sur la peinture.*"

At a late hour, I found Dr. Johnson sitting over his tea, attended by Mrs. Desmoulins, Mr. Levett, and a clergyman, who had come to submit some poetical pieces to his revision. The authour asked him bluntly, "If upon the whole it was a good translation?" Johnson, whose regard for truth was uncommonly strict, seemed to be puzzled for a moment: with exquisite address he evaded the question thus, "Sir, I do not say that it may not be made a very good translation." A printed *Ode to the Warlike Genius of Britain* came next in review; the bard was a lank, bony figure, with short black hair: he was writhing himself in agitation, while Johnson read, and shewing his teeth in a grin of earnestness, exclaimed in broken sentences, and in a keen sharp tone, "Is that poetry, Sir? — Is it Pindar?" JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, there is here a great deal of what is called poetry. Here is an errour, Sir; you have made Genius feminine." — "Palpable, Sir: (cried the enthusiast) I know it. But it was a compliment to the Duchess of Devonshire, with which her Grace was pleased. She is walking across Coxheath, in the military uniform, and I suppose her to be the Genius of Britain." JOHNSON. "Sir, you are giving a reason for it; but that will not make it right. You may have a reason why two and two should make five; but they will still make but four."

He said he expected to be attacked on account of his "Lives of the Poets." "However (said he,) I would rather be attacked than unnoticed. For the worst thing you can do to an authour is to be silent as to his works. An assault upon a town is a bad thing; but starving it is still worse; an assault may be unsuccessful, you may have more men killed than you kill; but if you starve the town, you are sure of victory."

JOHNSON. "Sir, one may be so much a man of the world, as to be nothing in the world. I remember a passage in Goldsmith's 'Vicar of Wakefield,' which he was afterwards fool enough to expunge: 'I do not love a man who is zealous for nothing.'" BOSWELL. "That was a fine passage." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir: there was another fine passage too, which he struck out: 'When I was a young man, being anxious to distinguish myself, I was perpetually starting new propositions. But I soon gave this over; for, I found that generally what was new was false.'" I said I did not like to sit with people of whom I had not a good opinion. JOHNSON. "But you must not indulge your delicacy too much; or you will be a *tête-à-tête* man all your life."

Talking of the wonderful concealment of the authour of the celebrated letters signed *Junius:* he said, "I should have believed Burke to be Junius, because I know no man but Burke who is capable of writing these letters; but Burke spontaneously denied it to me. The case would have been different, had I asked him if he was the authour; a man so questioned, as to an anonymous publication, may think he has a right to deny it."

He maintained that a father had no right to control the inclinations of his daughters in marriage.

When I confessed that I had spent a whole night in playing at cards, and that I could not look back on it with satisfaction: he mildly said, "Alas, Sir, on how few things can we look back with satisfaction."

He said, "To a man whose pleasure is intellectual, London is the place. And there is no place where economy can be so well practised as in London. You cannot play tricks with your fortune in a small place; you must make an uniform appearance. Here a lady may have well-furnished apartments, and elegant dress, without any meat in her kitchen." He himself was at all times sensible of its being, comparatively speaking, a heaven upon earth. Mr. Burke, whose orderly and amiable domestick habits might make the eye of observation less irksome to Him [illegible]

to most men, said once, "Though I have the honour to represent Bristol, I should not like to live there; I should be obliged to be so much *upon my good behaviour*." In London, a man's own house is truly his *castle*, in which he can be in perfect safety from intrusion whenever he pleases. I never shall forget how well this was expressed by Mr. Meynell: "The chief advantage of London (said he,) is that a man is always *so near his burrow*."

He said of one of his old acquaintances, "He is very fit for a travelling governour. There would be no danger that a young gentleman should catch his manner; for it is so very bad, that it must be avoided. In that respect he would be like the drunken Helot. Sir, he has the most *inverted* understanding of any man whom I have ever known."

Good-Friday, I visited him in the morning as usual. We insensibly fell into a train of ridicule upon the foibles of one of our friends. I, by way of a check, quoted from "The Government of the Tongue." It happened that the subject of the sermon to-day by Dr. Burrows, the rector of St. Clement Danes, was the certainty that at the last day we must give an account of "the deeds done in the body;" and amongst various acts of culpability he mentioned evil-speaking. As we were moving slowly along in the crowd from church, Johnson jogged my elbow, and said, "Did you attend to the sermon?" — "Yes, Sir, said I,) 'it was very applicable to *us*." He, however, stood upon the defensive. "Why, Sir, the sense of ridicule is given us, and may be lawfully used. The authour of 'The Government of the Tongue' would have us treat all men alike."

In the interval between morning and evening service, he endeavoured to employ himself earnestly in devotional exercise; and gave me "*Les Pensées de Paschal*," that I might not interrupt him. I preserve the book with reverence.

On Saturday, I found him sitting in Mrs. Williams's room, with a son of the second Lord Southwell. The table had a singular appearance, being covered with a heterogeneous

assemblage of oysters and porter for his company, and tea for himself.

JOHNSON. "No, Sir, claret is the liquor for boys, port for men; but he who aspires to be a hero (smiling) must drink brandy. Brandy will do soonest for a man what drinking *can* do for him." I reminded him how heartily he and I used to drink wine together, when we were first acquainted: and how I used to have a head-ache after sitting up with him. "Nay, Sir, it was not the *wine* that made your head ache, but the *sense* that I put into it." BOSWELL. "What, Sir! will sense make the head ache?" JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, (with a smile) when it is not used to it." No man who has a true relish of pleasantry could be offended at this. I used to say, that as he had given me a thousand pounds in praise, he had a good right now and then to take a guinea from me.

Lord Graham, while he praised the beauty of Loch-Lomond, on the banks of which is his family seat, complained of the climate, and said he could not bear it. JOHNSON. "Nay, my Lord, don't talk so: you may bear it well enough. Your ancestors have borne it more years than I can tell," a handsome compliment to the antiquity of the House of Montrose. Johnson was very courteous to Lady Margaret Macdonald. "Madam, (said he,) when I was in the Isle of Sky, I heard of the people running to take the stones off the road, lest Lady Margaret's horse should stumble."

Lord Graham commended a man of extraordinary talents; and added, that he had a great love of liberty. JOHNSON. "He is *young*, my Lord; (looking to his Lordship with an arch smile) all *boys* love liberty, till experience convinces them they are not so fit to govern themselves as they imagined. We are all agreed as to our own liberty; we would have as much of it as we can get; but we are not agreed as to the liberty of others: for in proportion as we take, others must lose. I believe we hardly wish that the mob should have liberty to govern us. When that was the case some time ago, no man was at liberty not to have candles in his windows."

"I am always for getting a boy forward in his learning: for that is a sure good. I would let him at first read *any* English book which happens to engage his attention; because you have done a great deal, when you have brought him to have entertainment from a book. He'll get better books afterwards."

"To be contradicted, in order to force you to talk is mighty unpleasing. You *shine*, indeed; but it is by being *ground*."

Mr. Wilkes had attacked Garrick to me, as a man who had no friend. JOHNSON. "I believe he is right, Sir. Οἱ φίλοι, οὐ φίλος — He had friends, but no friend. Garrick was so diffused, he had no man to whom he wished to unbosom himself. He found people always ready to applaud him, and that always for the same thing: so he saw life with great uniformity." I took upon me, for once, to fight with Goliath's weapons, and play the sophist. — Garrick did not need a friend, as he got from every body all he wanted. What is a friend? One who supports you and comforts you, while others do not. Friendship, you know, Sir, is the cordial drop, 'to make the nauseous draught of life go down:' but if the draught be not nauseous, if it be all sweet, there is no occasion for that drop." JOHNSON. "Many men would not be content to live so. I hope I should not. They would wish to have an intimate friend, with whom they might compare minds, and cherish private virtues. Garrick was a very good man, the cheerfulest man of his age; a decent liver in a profession which is supposed to give indulgence to licentiousness; and a man who gave away, freely, money acquired by himself. He began the world with a great hunger for money: the son of a half-pay officer, bred in a family whose study was to make four-pence do as much as others made four-pence halfpenny do. But, when he had got money, he was very liberal." BOSWELL. "You say, Sir, his death eclipsed the gaiety of nations." JOHNSON. "I could not have said more nor less. It is the truth: *eclipsed*, not *extinguished*; and his death *did* eclipse; it was like a storm." BOSWELL. "Did his gaiety extend further than his own nation?" JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, some exaggeration must be allowed. Besides, nations may be said

— if we allow the Scotch to be a nation, and to have gaiety, — which they have not. *You* are an exception, though. Come, gentlemen, let us candidly admit that there is one Scotchman who is cheerful."

I was in great pain with an inflamed foot. He brought Sir Joshua Reynolds. Their conversation, while they sat by my bedside, was the most pleasing opiate to pain that could have been administered.

Johnson being now better disposed to obtain information concerning Pope than he was last year, sent by me to my Lord Marchmont, a present of his "Lives of the Poets," with a request to have permission to wait on him; and his Lordship, who had called on him twice, obligingly appointed Saturday, the first of May, for receiving us.

After drinking chocolate at General Paoli's, we proceeded to Lord Marchmont's. His Lordship met us at the door of his library, and said to Johnson, "I am not going to make an encomium upon *myself*, by telling you the high respect I have for *you*, Sir." The interview, which lasted about two hours, during which the Earl communicated his anecdotes of Pope, was as agreeable as I could have wished.

To John Wesley.

"Mr. Boswell, a gentleman who has been long known to me, is desirous of being known to you, and has asked this recommendation, which I give him with great willingness, because, I think it very much to be wished that worthy and religious men should be acquainted with each other. Sam. Johnson."

I did not write to Johnson, as usual, upon my return to my family; but tried how he would be affected by my silence.

To Boswell.

"What can possibly have happened, that keeps us two such strangers to each other? I expected to have heard from you when you came home; I expected afterwards. I went

into the country, and returned; and yet there is no letter from Mr. Boswell. No ill I hope has happened; and if ill should happen, why should it be concealed from him who loves you? Is it a fit of humour, that has disposed you to try who can hold out longest without writing? If it be, you have the victory. But I am afraid of something bad; set me free from my suspicions. SAM. JOHNSON."

Dr. Johnson sometimes employed himself in chymistry, sometimes in watering and pruning a vine, sometimes in small experiments.°

I defended myself against his suspicion of me, "Pray, let us write frequently. A whim strikes me, that we should send off a sheet once a week, like a stage coach, whether it be full or not; nay, though it should be empty." I called at his house before he was up. He sent for me to his bedside, and with as much vivacity as if he had been in the gaiety of youth, called briskly, "Frank, go and get coffee, and let us breakfast *in splendour*."

I consulted him as to the appointment of guardians to my children, in case of my death. "Sir, (said he,) do not appoint a number of guardians. When there are many, they trust one to another, and the business is neglected. I would advise you to choose only one; let him be a man of respectable character, who, for his own credit, will do what is right; let him be a rich man, so that he may be under no temptation to take advantage; and let him be a man of business, who is used to conduct affairs with ability and expertness, to whom therefore, the execution of the trust will not be burdensome."

"A man had better have ten thousand pounds at the end of ten years passed in England, than twenty thousand pounds at the end of ten years passed in India, because you must compute what you *give* for money; and a man who has lived ten years in India, has given up ten years of social comfort and all those advantages which arise from living in England. Lord Clive shewed at the door of his bed-chamber a large chest, which he said he had once had full of gold; Brown observed, 'I am glad you can bear it so near your bed-chamber.'"

We talked of the state of the poor in London. — JOHNSON. "Saunders Welch, the Justice, who was once High-Constable of Holborn, and had the best opportunities of knowing the state of the poor, told me that I under-rated the number, when I computed that twenty a week, that is, above a thousand a year, died of hunger; not absolutely of immediate hunger; but of the wasting and other diseases which are the consequences of hunger. This happens only in so large a place as London, where people are not known. What we are told about the great sums got by begging, is not true: the trade is overstocked. And, you may depend upon it, there are many who cannot get work. A particular kind of manufacture fails: Those who have been used to work at it, can, for some time, work at nothing else. You meet a man begging; you charge him with idleness: he says, 'I am willing to labour. Will you give me work?' — 'I cannot.' — 'Why then you have no right to charge me with idleness.'"

To BOSWELL, FROM HUGH BLAIR.

"LORD Bathurst told us, that 'The Essay on Man' was originally composed by Lord Bolingbroke in prose, and that Mr. Pope did no more than put it into verse.

"Lord Bathurst said to me that part of the Iliad was translated by Mr. Pope in his house in the country; and that in the morning when they assembled at breakfast, Mr. Pope used frequently to repeat, with great rapture,° the Greek lines which he had been translating, and then to give them his version of them, and to compare them together."

BOSWELL. "Why, Sir, do people play this trick which I observe now, when I look at your grate, putting the shovel against it to make the fire burn?" JOHNSON. "They play the trick, but it does not make the fire burn. *There* is a better; (setting the poker perpendicularly up at right angles with the grate.) In days of superstition they thought, as it made a cross with the bars, it would drive away the witch."

BOSWELL. "By associating with you, Sir, I am always

getting an accession of wisdom." JOHNSON. "Sir, be as wise as you can; let a man be *aliis lætus, sapiens sibi:*

> 'Though pleas'd to see the dolphins play,
> I mind my compass and my way.'

You may be wise in your study in the morning, and gay in company at a tavern in the evening. Every man is to take care of his own wisdom and his own virtue, without minding too much what others think."

He said, "Dodsley first mentioned to me the scheme of an English Dictionary; but I had long thought of it." BOSWELL. "You did not know what you were undertaking." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, I knew very well what I was undertaking, — and very well how to do it, — and have done it very well." BOSWELL. "In your Preface you say, 'What would it avail me in this gloom of solitude?' You have been agreeably mistaken."

I prevailed on him to give me an exact list of his places of residence.°

I dined with him at Mr. Ramsay's, with Lord Newhaven. A beautiful Miss Graham, a relation of his Lordship's, asked Dr. Johnson to hob or nob with her. He was flattered by such pleasing attention, and politely told her he never drank wine; but if she would drink a glass of water, he was much at her service. She accepted. "Oho, Sir! (said Lord Newhaven,) you are caught." JOHNSON. "Nay, I do not see *how* I am *caught;* but if I am caught, I don't want to get free again. If I am caught, I hope to be kept." Then when the two glasses of water were brought, smiling placidly to the young lady, he said, "Madam, let us *reciprocate.*"

Lord Newhaven and Johnson carried on an argument for some time, concerning the Middlesex election. Johnson said, "Parliament may be considered as bound by law, as a man is bound where there is nobody to tie the knot. As it is clear that the House of Commons may expel, and expel again and again, why not allow of the power to incapacitate for that parliament, rather than have a perpetual contest kept up between parliament and the people."

He observed, "The House of Commons was originally not a privilege of the people, but a check, for the Crown, on the House of Lords. I remember, Henry the Eighth wanted them to do something; they hesitated in the morning, but did it in the afternoon. He told them, 'It is well you did; or half your heads should have been upon Temple-bar.' But the House of Commons is now no longer under the power of the Crown, and therefore must be bribed." He added, "I have no delight in talking of publick affairs."

JOHNSON. "Whitefield did not draw attention by doing better than others, but by doing what was strange. I never treated Whitefield's ministry with contempt; I believe he did good. He had devoted himself to the lower classes of mankind, and among them he was of use. But when familiarity and noise claim the praise due to knowledge, art, and elegance, we must beat down such pretensions."

BOSWELL. "Should you not like to see Dublin, Sir?"

JOHNSON. "No, Sir; Dublin is only a worse capital."

BOSWELL. "Is not the Giant's-causeway worth seeing?"

JOHNSON. "Worth seeing? yes; but not worth going to see."

Yet he had a kindness for the Irish nation, and thus generously expressed himself to a gentleman from that country, "Do not make an union with us, Sir. We should unite with you, only to rob you. We should have robbed the Scotch, if they had had any thing of which we could have robbed them."

A foreign minister of no very high talents, who had been in his company for a considerable time quite overlooked, happened luckily to mention that he had read some of his *Rambler* in Italian, and admired it much. This pleased him greatly: he observed that the title had been translated, *Il Genio errante*, though I have been told it was rendered more judiciously, *Il Vagabondo;* and finding that this minister gave such a proof of his taste, he was all attention to him, and on the first remark which he made, however simple, exclaimed, "The Ambassadour says well; — His Excellency observes —;" And then he expanded and enriched the little that had been said, in so strong a manner, that it appeared something of consequence.

This was exceedingly entertaining to the company who were present, and many a time afterwards it furnished a pleasant topick of merriment: "*The Ambassadour says well*," became a laughable term of applause, when no mighty matter had been expressed.

To Boswell.

"The great direction which Burton has left to men disordered like you, is this, *Be not solitary; be not idle:* which I would thus modify; — If you are idle, be not solitary; if you are solitary, be not idle.

"At Bolt-court there is much malignity, but of late little open hostility. Sam. Johnson."

After a good deal of enquiry I had discovered the sister of Mr. Francis Stewart, one of his amanuenses when writing his Dictionary; I had, as desired by him, paid her a guinea for an old pocket-book of her brother's which he had retained; and the good woman, who was in very moderate circumstances, but contented and placid, wondered at his scrupulous and liberal honesty, and received the guinea as if sent her by Providence.

To Boswell.

"Well, I had resolved to send you the Chesterfield letter, but I will write once again without it. Never impose tasks upon mortals. To require two things is the way to have them both undone.

"Poor dear Beauclerk — *nec, ut soles, dabis joca.* His wit and his folly, his acuteness and maliciousness, his merriment and reasoning, are now over. Such another will not often be found among mankind. He directed himself to be buried by the side of his mother, an instance of tenderness which I hardly expected. He has left his children to the care of Lady Di, and if she dies, of Mr. Langton, and of Mr. Leicester, his relation, and a man of good character. His library has been offered to sale to the Russian ambassador. Sam. Johnson."

MRS. THRALE TO DR. JOHNSON.

"YESTERDAY'S evening was passed at Mrs. Montagu's: there was Mr. Melmoth, just Tory enough to hate the Bishop of Peterborough for Whiggism, and Whig enough to abhor you for Toryism.

"Mrs. Montagu flattered him finely; so he had a good afternoon on't. This evening we spent at a concert. Poor Queeney's° sore eyes have just released her: she had a long confinement, and could neither read nor write, so my master treated her very good-naturedly with the visits of a young woman in this town, a taylor's daughter, who professes musick, and teaches so as to give six lessons a day to ladies, at five and threepence a lesson. Miss Burney says, she is a great performer; and I respect the wench for getting her living so prettily; she is very modest and pretty-mannered, and not seventeen years old.

"I *felt* my regard for you in my *face* last night, when the criticisms were going on.

"This morning it was all connoisseurship; we went to see some pictures painted by a gentleman-artist, Mr. Taylor, of this place; my master makes one everywhere, and has got a good dawdling companion to ride with him now. . . . He looks well enough, but I have no notion of health for a man whose mouth cannot be sewed up. Burney and I and Queeney teaze him every meal he eats, and Mrs. Montagu is quite serious with him; but what *can* one do? He will eat. I think, and if he does eat I know he will not live; it makes me very unhappy, but I must bear it. Let me always have your friendship. I am, most sincerely, dear Sir,

"Your faithful servant,

"Bath, Friday, April 28." "H. L. T."

TO MRS. THRALE.

"DEAREST MADAM,

"MR. THRALE never will live abstinently, till he can persuade himself to live by rule. . . . Encourage, as you can, the musical girl.

"Never let criticisms operate on your face or your mind; it is very rarely that an authour is hurt by his criticks. The blaze of reputation cannot be blown out, but it often dies in the socket; a very few names may be considered as perpetual lamps that shine unconsumed. SAM. JOHNSON."

LANGTON TO BOSWELL.

"JOHNSON said, 'That Beauclerk's talents were those which he had felt himself more disposed to envy, than those of any whom he had known.'

"At Mr. Vesey's, as soon as Dr. Johnson was come in, and had taken a chair, the company began to collect round him till they became not less than four, if not five, deep; those behind standing, and listening over the heads of those that were sitting near him. The conversation for some time was chiefly between Dr. Johnson and the Provost of Eton, while the others contributed occasionally their remarks."

TO MRS. THRALE.

"ON Friday the good Protestants met in Saint George's-Fields, at the summons of Lord George Gordon, and marching to Westminster, insulted the Lords and Commons, who all bore it with great tameness. At night the outrages began by the demolition of the mass-house by Lincoln's Inn.

"On Tuesday night they pulled down Fielding's house, and burnt his goods in the street. They had gutted on Monday Sir George Savile's house, but the building was saved. On Tuesday evening, leaving Fielding's ruins, they went to Newgate to demand their companions, who had been seized demolishing the chapel. The keeper could not release them but by the Mayor's permission, which he went to ask; at his return he found all the prisoners released, and Newgate in a blaze. They then went to Bloomsbury, and fastened upon Lord Mansfield's house, which they pulled down; and as for his goods, they totally burnt them.

"On Wednesday I walked with Dr. Scott to look at New-

gate, and found it in ruins, with the fire yet glowing. As I went by, the Protestants were plundering the Sessions-house at the Old-Bailey. There were not, I believe, a hundred; but they did their work at leisure, in full security, without sentinels, without trepidation, as men lawfully employed in full day. Such is the cowardice of a commercial place. On Wednesday they broke open the Fleet, and the King's-Bench, and the Marshalsea, and Wood-street Compter, and Clerkenwell Bridewell, and released all the prisoners.

"At night they set fire to the Fleet, and to the King's-Bench, and I know not how many other places; and one might see the glare of conflagration fill the sky from many parts. The sight was dreadful. Some people were threatened: Mr. Strahan advised me to take care of myself. Such a time of terrour you have been happy in not seeing.

"The King said in council, 'That the magistrates had not done their duty, but that he would do his own.'

"The soldiers are stationed so as to be every where within call: there is no longer any body of rioters, and the individuals are hunted to their holes, and led to prison; Lord George was last night sent to the Tower. Mr. John Wilkes was this day in my neighbourhood, to seize the publisher of a seditious paper."

"Several chapels have been destroyed, and several inoffensive Papists have been plundered, but the high sport was to burn the gaols. This was a good rabble trick. The debtors and the criminals were all set at liberty; but of the criminals, as has always happened, many are already retaken."

"The publick has escaped a very heavy calamity. The rioters attempted the Bank on Wednesday night, but in no great number; and like other thieves, with no great resolution. Jack Wilkes headed the party that drove them away. It is agreed, that if they had seized the Bank on Tuesday, at the height of the panick, when no resistance had been prepared, they might have carried irrecoverably away whatever they had found. Jack, who was always zealous for order and decency, declares, that if he be trusted with power,

he will not leave a rioter alive. There is, however, now no longer any need of heroism or bloodshed; no blue ribband is any longer worn. SAM. JOHNSON."

I should think myself very much to blame, did I here neglect to do justice to my esteemed friend Mr. Akerman, the keeper of Newgate.

From the timidity and negligence of magistracy on the one hand, and the almost incredible exertions of the mob on the other, the first prison of this great country was laid open, and the prisoners set free; but that Mr. Akerman, whose house was burnt, would have prevented all this, had proper aid been sent him in due time, there can be no doubt.

Many years ago, a fire broke out in the brick part which was built as an addition to the old gaol of Newgate. The Prisoners were in consternation and tumult, calling out, "We shall be burnt — we shall be burnt! Down with the gate! — down with the gate!" Mr. Akerman hastened to them, shewed himself at the gate, and having, after some confused vociferation of "Hear him! — hear him!" obtained a silent attention, he then calmly told them, that the gate must not go down; that they were under his care, and that they should not be permitted to escape. "I have no doubt that the engines will soon extinguish this fire; if they should not, a sufficient guard will come, and you shall be all taken out and lodged in the Compters. I assure you, upon my word and honour, that I have not a farthing insured. I have left my house that I might take care of you. I will keep my promise, and stay with you if you insist upon it; but if you will allow me to go and look after my family and property, I shall be obliged to you." Struck with his behaviour, they called out, "Master Akerman, you have done bravely; it was very kind in you: by all means go and take care of your own concerns." He did so accordingly, while they remained, and were all preserved.

Johnson has been heard to relate the substance of this story with high praise, in which he was joined by Mr. Burke.

To Boswell.

"I have sat at home in Bolt-court, all the summer, thinking to write the Lives, and a great part of the time only thinking. Several of them, however, are done, and I still think to do the rest.

"I would have gone to Lichfield if I could have had time, and I might have had time if I had been active; but I have missed much, and done little.

"In the late disturbances, Mr. Thrale's house and stock were in great danger; the mob was pacified at their first invasion, with about fifty pounds in drink and meat; and at their second, were driven away by the soldiers. Mr. Strahan got a garrison into his house, and maintained them a fortnight; he was so frighted, that he removed part of his goods. Mrs. Williams took shelter in the country. Sam. Johnson."

Mr. Thrale had now another contest for the representation in Parliament of the borough of Southwark, and Johnson kindly lent him his assistance, by writing advertisements for him. I shall insert one as a specimen.

To the Worthy Electors of the Borough of Southwark.

"Gentlemen,

"A new Parliament being now called, I again solicit the honour of being elected for one of your representatives; and solicit it with the greater confidence, as I am not conscious of having neglected my duty, or of having acted otherwise than as becomes the independent representative of independent constituents; superiour to fear, hope, and expectation, who has no private purposes to promote, and whose prosperity is involved in the prosperity of his country. As my recovery from a very severe distemper is not yet perfect, I have declined to attend the Hall, and hope an omission so necessary will not be harshly censured.

"I can only send my respectful wishes, that all your deliberations may tend to the happiness of the kingdom, and the peace of the borough. I am, Gentlemen,

"Your most faithful

"And obedient servant,

"HENRY THRALE."

On his birth-day, Johnson has this note; "I am now beginning the seventy-second year of my life, with more strength of body, and greater vigour of mind, than I think is common at that age." But still he complains of sleepless nights and idle days, and forgetfulness, or neglect of resolutions. He thus pathetically expresses himself: "Surely I shall not spend my whole life with my own total disapprobation."

To BOSWELL.

"I AM sorry to write you a letter that will not please you, and yet it is at last what I resolve to do. This year must pass without an interview; the summer has been foolishly lost, like many other of my summers and winters. I hardly saw a green field, but staid in town to work, without working much.

"Mr. Thrale's loss of health has lost him the election; he is now going to Brighthelmston, and expects me to go with him. I do not much like the place, but yet I shall go, and stay while my stay is desired. SAM. JOHNSON."

JOHNSON. "Theocritus is not deserving of very high respect as a writer; as to the pastoral part, Virgil is very evidently superiour. Some of the most excellent parts of Theocritus are where Castor and Pollux, going with the other Argonauts, land on the Bebrycian coast, and there fall into a dispute with Amycus, the King of that country: which is as well conducted as Euripides could have done it; and the battle is well related. 'The Sicilian Gossips'[°] is a piece of merit."

"It may be questioned, whether there is not some mistake as to the methods of employing the poor, seemingly on a

supposition that there is a certain portion of work left undone for want of persons to do it; but if that is otherwise, a certain part of those very materials that, as it is, are properly worked up, must be spoiled by the unskilfulness of novices. We may apply to well-meaning, but misjudging persons in particulars of this nature, what Giannone said to a monk, who wanted what he called to *convert* him: '*Tu sei santo, ma tu non sei filosopho.*' — One might give away five hundred pounds in a year to those that importune in the streets, and not do any good."

"There is nothing more likely to betray a man into absurdity than *condescension;* when he seems to suppose his understanding too powerful for his company."

"Sir, among the anfractuosities of the human mind, I know not if it may not be one, that there is a superstitious reluctance to sit for a picture."

Soon after the publication of his Dictionary, Garrick being asked by Johnson what people said of it, told him, that it was objected that he cited authorities which were beneath the dignity of such a work, and mentioned Richardson. "Nay, (said Johnson,) I have done worse than that: I have cited *thee*, David."

One day, having read over one of his Ramblers, Mr. Langton asked him, how he liked that paper; he shook his head, and answered, "too wordy." At another time, when one was reading his tragedy of "Irene," to a company at a house in the country, he left the room: and somebody having asked him the reason of this, he replied, "Sir, I thought it had been better."

Talking of a point of delicate scrupulosity of moral conduct, he said to Mr. Langton, "Men of harder minds than ours will do many things from which you and I would shrink; yet, Sir, they will perhaps do more good in life than we."

Of Sir Joshua Reynolds, he said, "Sir, I know no man who has passed through life with more observation than Reynolds."

He repeated to Mr. Langton, with great energy, in the Greek, our SAVIOUR's gracious expression concerning the for-

giveness of Mary Magdalen, "Ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέ σε· πορεύου εἰς εἰρήνην." "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." He said, "the manner of this dismission is exceedingly affecting."

He thus defined the difference between physical and moral truth: "Physical truth is, when you tell a thing as it actually is. Moral truth is, when you tell a thing sincerely and precisely as it appears to you. I say such a one walked across the street; if he really did so, I told a physical truth. If I thought so, though I should have been mistaken, I told a moral truth."

Huggins, the translator of Ariosto, and Mr. Thomas Warton had a dispute concerning that poet. Johnson said, "It appears to me, that Huggins has ball without powder, and Warton powder without ball."

Talking of the Farce of "High Life below Stairs," he said, "Here is a Farce, which is really very diverting, when you see it acted; and yet one may read it, and not know that one has been reading any thing at all."

He used at one time to go occasionally to the green-room of Drury-lane Theatre, where he was much regarded by the players, and was very easy and facetious with them. He had a very high opinion of Mrs. Clive's comick powers. "Clive, Sir, is a good thing to sit by; she always understands what you say." And she said of him, "I love to sit by Dr. Johnson: he always entertains me."

One evening, "I met David coming off the stage, drest in a woman's riding hood, when he acted in The Wonder; I came full upon him, and I believe he was not pleased."

Once he asked Tom Davies, whom he saw drest in a fine suit of clothes, "And what art thou to-night?" Tom answered, "The Thane of Ross" (which it will be recollected is a very inconsiderable character). "O brave!" said Johnson.

A story was told, that when Pope was on a visit to Spence at Oxford, as they looked from the window, they saw a gentleman-commoner, who was just come in from riding, amusing himself with whipping at a post. Pope took occasion to say, "That young gentleman seems to have little to do." Mr.

Beauclerk observed, "Then, to be sure, Spence turned round and wrote that down. Pope, Sir, would have said the same of you, if he had seen you distilling." JOHNSON. "Sir, if Pope had told me of my distilling, I would have told him of his grotto."

A friend one day suggested, that it was not wholesome to study soon after dinner. JOHNSON. "Ah, Sir, don't give way to such a fancy. At one time of my life I had taken it into my head that it was not wholesome to study between breakfast and dinner."

Dr. Goldsmith, upon occasion of Mrs. Lennox's bringing out a play, said to Dr. Johnson at the CLUB, that a person had advised him to go and hiss it, because she had attacked Shakspeare in her book called "Shakspeare Illustrated." JOHNSON. "And did not you tell him that he was a rascal?" GOLDSMITH. "No, Sir, I did not. Perhaps he might not mean what he said." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, if he lied, it is a different thing." Colman slily said, (but it is believed Dr. Johnson did not hear him,) "Then the proper expression should have been, — Sir, if you don't lie, you're a rascal."

When Beauclerk was labouring under that severe illness which at last occasioned his death, Johnson said, (with a voice faltering with emotion,) "Sir, I would walk to the extent of the diameter of the earth to save Beauclerk."

"A Scotchman, Sir, though you vote nineteen times against him, will accost you with equal complaisance after each time, and the twentieth time, Sir, he will get your vote."

He made his usual remark, that the State has a right to regulate the religion of the people, who are the children of the State. A clergyman having readily acquiesced in this, Johnson, who loved discussion, observed, "But, Sir, you must go round to other States than our own. You do not know what a Bramin has to say for himself. Every man has a right to utter what he thinks truth, and every other man has a right to knock him down for it. Martyrdom is the test."

"A man, he observed, should begin to write soon. It is related of the great Lord Granville; that after he had written

his letter giving an account of the battle of Dettingen, he said, 'Here is a letter, expressed in terms not good enough for a tallow-chandler to have used.'"

Talking of a Court-martial that was sitting upon a very momentous publick occasion, he expressed much doubt of an enlightened decision; and said, that perhaps there was not a member of it, who in the whole course of his life, had ever spent an hour by himself in balancing probabilities.

Goldsmith brought to the CLUB a printed Ode, which had been read by its authour in a publick room, at the rate of five shillings each for admission. JOHNSON. "Bolder words and more timorous meaning, I think, never were brought together."

Talking of Gray's Odes, he said, "They are forced plants, raised in a hot-bed; and they are poor plants; they are but cucumbers after all." A gentleman present, who had been running down ode-writing, as a bad species of poetry, unluckily said, "Had they been literary cucumbers, they had been better things than Odes." — "Yes, Sir, (said Johnson,) for a *hog*."

Of Queen Elizabeth he said, "She had learning enough to have given dignity to a bishop;" and of Mr. Thomas Davies, "Sir, Davies has learning enough to give credit to a clergyman."

He used to quote with great warmth, the saying of Aristotle; that there was the same difference between one learned and unlearned, as between the living and the dead.

He retained in his memory very slight and trivial, as well as important, things. An inferiour domestick of the Duke of Leeds had attempted to celebrate his Grace's marriage in rhymes; and this curious composition having been sung to Dr. Johnson, he got it by heart, and used to repeat it in a very pleasant manner.

"When the Duke of Leeds shall married be
To a fine young lady of high quality,
How happy will that gentlewoman be
In his Grace of Leeds's good company.

"She shall have all that's fine and fair,
And the best of silk and sattin shall wear;
And ride in a coach to take the air,
And have a house in St. James's-Square."

He seriously observed of the last stanza, that it nearly comprised all the advantages that wealth can give.

An eminent foreigner, when he was shewn the British Museum, was very troublesome with many absurd enquiries. "Now there, Sir, (said he,) is the difference between an Englishman and a Frenchman. A Frenchman must be always talking, whether he knows any thing of the matter or not; an Englishman is content to say nothing, when he has nothing to say."

His unjust contempt for foreigners was, indeed, extreme. At Old Slaughter's coffee-house, a number of them were talking loud about little matters. He said, "Does not this confirm old Meynell's observation — *For any thing I see, foreigners are fools?*"

He said, that once, when he had a violent toothach, a Frenchman accosted him thus: *Ah, Monsieur, vous etudiez trop.*

"It is evident enough that no one who writes now can use the Pagan deities and mythology; the only machinery, therefore, seems that of ministering spirits, the ghosts of the departed, witches, and fairies, though these latter, as the vulgar superstition concerning them is every day wearing out, seem likely to be of little further assistance in the machinery of poetry."

"Lord —— was likely, after asserting a thing in general, to give it up again in parts. If he had said Reynolds was the first of painters, he was capable enough of giving up, as objections might happen to be severally made, first, his outline, — then the grace in form, — then the colouring, — and lastly, to have owned that he was such a mannerist, that the disposition of his pictures was all alike."

"Hospitality to strangers and foreigners in our country is now almost at an end; since there have been a sufficient

number of people that have found an interest in providing inns and proper accommodations."

He used frequently to observe, that men might be very eminent in a profession, without our perceiving any particular power of mind in them in conversation. "It seems strange (said he,) that a man should see so far to the right, who sees so short a way to the left. Burke is the only man whose common conversation corresponds with the general fame which he has in the world. Take up whatever topick you please, he is ready to meet you."

Mr. Langton, when a very young man, read Dodsley's "Cleone, a Tragedy," to him, not aware of his extreme impatience to be read to. As it went on he turned his face to the back of his chair, and put himself into various attitudes, which marked his uneasiness. At the end of an act, however, he said, "Come, let's have some more, let's go into the slaughter-house again, Lanky. But I am afraid there is more blood than brains."

"I would put a child into a library (where no unfit books are) and let him read at his choice. A child should not be discouraged from reading any thing that he takes a liking to, from a notion that it is above his reach."

Once, to avoid the trouble of locking up five guineas, he hid them, he forgot where, so that he could not find them.

A gentleman who introduced his brother to Dr. Johnson, was earnest to recommend him to the Doctor's notice, which he did by saying, "When we have sat together some time, you'll find my brother grow very entertaining." — "Sir, (said Johnson,) I can wait."

When the rumour was strong that we should have a war, because the French would assist the Americans, he rebuked a friend with some asperity for supposing it, saying, "No, Sir, national faith is not yet sunk so low."

Goldsmith had long a visionary project, that some time when his circumstances should be easier, he would go to Aleppo, to acquire a knowledge of arts peculiar to the East,

and introduce them into Britain. Dr. Johnson said, of all men Goldsmith is the most unfit to go out upon such an enquiry; for he is utterly ignorant of such arts as we already possess. "Sir, he would bring home a grinding-barrow, which you see in every street in London, and think that he had furnished a wonderful improvement."

"Greek, Sir, (said he) is like lace; every man gets as much of it as he can."

Drinking tea one day at Garrick's with Mr. Langton, he was questioned if he was not somewhat of a heretic as to Shakspeare; said Garrick, "I doubt he is a little of an infidel." — "Sir, (said Johnson,) I will stand by the lines I have written on Shakspeare in my Prologue at the opening of your Theatre." Mr. Langton suggested, that in the line

"And panting Time toil'd after him in vain;"

Johnson might have had in his eye the passage in the "Tempest," where Prospero says of Miranda,

"——She will outstrip all praise,
And make it halt behind her."

Johnson said nothing. GARRICK. "I do not think that the happiest line in the praise of Shakspeare." JOHNSON. (smiling,) "Prosaical rogues! next time I write, I'll make both time and space pant."

As Johnson always allowed the extraordinary talents of Mr. Burke, so Mr. Burke was fully sensible of the wonderful powers of Johnson. Mr. Langton recollects having passed an evening with both of them, when Mr. Burke repeatedly entered upon topicks which it was evident he would have illustrated with extensive knowledge and richness of expression; but Johnson always seized upon the conversation, in which, however, he acquitted himself in a most masterly manner. As Mr. Burke and Mr. Langton were walking home, Mr. Burke observed that Johnson had been very great that night; Mr. Langton joined in this, but added, he could have wished to hear more from another person (plainly intimat-

ing that he meant Mr. Burke). "O, no, (said Mr. Burke,) it is enough for me to have rung the bell to him."

Beauclerk observed of one of their friends, that he was awkward at counting money, "Why, Sir," said Johnson, "I am likewise awkward at counting money. But then, Sir, the reason is plain; I have had very little money to count."

He had an abhorrence of affectation. Of old Mr. Langton, he said, "Sir, he has no grimace, no gesticulation, no bursts of admiration on trivial occasions; he never embraces you with an overacted cordiality."

A gentleman thought fit to maintain Dr. Berkeley's ingenious philosophy, that nothing exists but as perceived by some mind. When the gentleman was going away, Johnson said, "Pray, Sir, don't leave us; for we may perhaps forget to think of you, and then you will cease to exist."

Goldsmith, visited by Johnson one day in the Temple, said with a little jealousy of the appearance of his accommodation, "I shall soon be in better chambers than these." Johnson at the same time checked him and paid him a handsome compliment, implying that a man of his talents should be above attention to such distinctions, — "Nay, Sir, never mind that; *Nil te quæsiveris extra.*"

When Mr. Vesey was proposed as a member of the Literary Club, Mr. Burke began by saying, that he was a man of gentle manners. "Sir," said Johnson, "you need say no more. When you have said a man of gentle manners, you have said enough."

Johnson said, "Sir, a man has no more right to *say* an uncivil thing, than to *act* one; no more right to say a rude thing to another than to knock him down."

Somebody produced a newspaper in which there was a letter of stupid abuse of Sir Joshua Reynolds, of which Johnson himself came in for a share, — "Pray," said he, "let us have it read aloud from beginning to end;" he with a ludicrous earnestness, and not directing his look to any particular person, called out, "Are we alive after all this satire!"

Of Dr. Goldsmith he said, "No man was more foolish

when he had not a pen in his hand, or more wise when he had."

"If a man *talks* of his misfortunes, there is something in them that is not disagreeable to him; for where there is nothing but pure misery, there never is any recourse to the mention of it."

"A man must be a poor beast, that should *read* no more in quantity than he could *utter* aloud."

"Imlac in 'Rasselas.' I spelt with a *c* at the end, because it is less like English, which should always have the Saxon *k* added to the *c*."

"Many a man is mad in certain instances, and goes through life without having it perceived; — for example, a madness of supposing himself obliged literally to pray continually: had the madness turned the opposite way, and the person thought it a crime ever to pray, it might have continued unobserved."

He apprehended that the delineation of *characters* in the end of the first Book of the "Retreat of the ten thousand" was the first instance of the kind that was known.

"Supposing (said he,) a wife to be of a studious or argumentative turn, it would be very troublesome: — if a woman should continually dwell upon the subject of the Arian heresy."

"No man speaks concerning another, even in his praise, exactly as he would, if he was within hearing."

"The applause of a single human being is of great consequence."

He observed that a beggar in the street will more readily ask alms from a *man*, than from even a well-dressed *woman*: which he accounted for from the great degree of carefulness as to money, that is to be found in women; saying farther upon it, that the opportunities in general that they possess of improving their condition are much fewer than men have; — "there is not one of us who does not think he might be richer, if he would use his endeavour."

He characterised an ingenious writer: "Sir, he is an enthusiast by rule."

The Reverend Dr. Franklin having published a translation of "Lucian," inscribed to him the *Demonax* thus:

"To Dr. Samuel Johnson, the Demonax of the present age."

Johnson at last completed his "Lives of the Poets." "Some time in March I finished the 'Lives of the Poets,' which I wrote in my usual way, dilatorily and hastily, unwilling to work, and working with vigour and haste." In a memorandum: "Written, I hope, in such a manner as may tend to the promotion of piety."

His mind was so full of information, so well arranged in his memory, that he had little more to do than to put his thoughts upon paper; exhibiting first each Poet's life, and then subjoining a critical examination of his genius and works. But the subject swelled in such a manner, that instead of prefaces to each poet, of no more than a few pages, he produced an ample, rich, and most entertaining view of them in every respect. The booksellers, justly sensible of the great additional value of the copy-right, presented him with another hundred pounds, over and above two-hundred.

As he was so good as to make me a present of the only manuscript, I have an opportunity of observing the correctness with which he rapidly struck off such glowing composition.

I observe the fair hand of Mrs. Thrale as one of his copyists.

The Life of Cowley he himself considered as the best of the whole, on account of the dissertation which it contains on the *Metaphysical Poets*.

So easy is his style in these Lives, that I do not recollect more than three uncommon or learned words; one: giving an account of the approach of Waller's mortal disease, he says, "he found his legs grow *tumid*." He mentions that Pope had *emitted* proposals; when *published* or *issued* would have been more readily understood. He calls Orrery and Dr. Delaney writers both undoubtedly *veracious;* when *true*, *honest*, or *faithful*, might have been used.

Against his Life of Milton, the hounds of Whiggism have

opened in full cry. But of Milton's great excellence as a poet, where shall we find such a blazon as by the hand of Johnson? I select the passage concerning PARADISE LOST:

"Fancy can hardly forbear to conjecture with what temper Milton surveyed the silent progress of his work, and marked his reputation stealing its way in a kind of subterraneous current, through fear and silence."

That a man, who venerated the Church and Monarchy as Johnson did, should speak with a just abhorrence of Milton as a politician, was surely to be expected; I would recommend his commentary on Milton's celebrated complaint of his situation, when by the lenity of Charles the Second, "he, who had written in justification of the murder of his Sovereign, was safe under an *Act of Oblivion*." "No sooner is he safe than he finds himself in danger, *fallen on evil days and evil tongues, with darkness and with dangers compassed round*. He was fallen, indeed, on *evil days;* the time was come in which regicides could no longer boast their wickedness. But of *evil tongues* for Milton to complain, required impudence at least equal to his other powers; Milton, whose warmest advocates must allow, that he never spared any asperity of reproach, or brutality of insolence."

Johnson took occasion to maintain his own and the general opinion of the excellence of rhyme over blank verse, in English poetry; and quotes this apposite illustration of it by "an ingenious critick," that *it seems to be verse only to the eye.*

In the numerous writings of Johnson, even in his Tragedy, of which the subject is the distress of an unfortunate Princess, there is not a single passage that ever drew a tear.

The Life of Pope was written *con amore*, pronouncing the triumphant eulogium: "After all this, it is surely superfluous to answer the question that has once been asked, Whether Pope was a poet? otherwise than by asking in return, if Pope be not a poet, where is poetry to be found? To circumscribe poetry by a definition, will only shew the narrowness of the definer; though a definition which shall exclude Pope will not easily be made."

"Sir, a thousand years may elapse before there shall appear another man with a power of versification equal to that of Pope."

Pope differed widely from Johnson, whose conversation was, perhaps, more admirable than his writings. Mr. Wilkes has, however, favoured me with one repartee of Pope. When he was asked by his Royal Highness, *how he could love a Prince, while he disliked Kings?* the answer which Pope made, was, "The young lion is harmless, and even playful; but when his claws are full-grown, he becomes cruel, dreadful, and mischievous."

Johnson has been heard to say, that "the happiest conversation is that of which nothing is distinctly remembered, but a general effect of pleasing impression."

In the Life of ADDISON we find an unpleasing account of his having lent Steele a hundred pounds, and "reclaimed his loan by an execution." Malone says, "Dr. Johnson had it from Savage, who lived in intimacy with Steele, and who mentioned that Steele told him the story with tears in his eyes. Some in defence of Addison, have said, that 'the act was done with the good-natured view of rousing Steele, and correcting that profusion which always made him necessitous.'—'If that were the case, (said Johnson,) and that he only wanted to alarm Steele, he would afterwards have *returned* the money to his friend, which it is not pretended he did.' 'But of such speculations there is no end; we cannot dive into the hearts of men; but their actions are open to observation.'"

"The sacred writers (he observed,) related the vicious as well as the virtuous actions of men; which had this moral effect, that it kept mankind from *despair*."

In the Life of LYTTELTON, Johnson seems to have been not favourably disposed towards that nobleman. Mrs. Thrale suggests that he was offended by *Molly Aston's* preference of his Lordship to him.

He did Mr. Herbert Croft the honour to adopt a Life of Young written by that gentleman, who was the friend of Dr.

Young's son. A very eminent literary character opposed me vehemently, exclaiming, "No, no, it is *not* a good imitation of Johnson; it has all his pomp without his force; it has all the nodosities of the oak without its strength. It has all the contortions of the Sybil, without the inspiration."

Johnson's decision upon "NIGHT THOUGHTS:"—"A wilderness of thought, in which the fertility of fancy scatters flowers of every hue and of every odour. This is one of the few poems in which blank verse could not be changed for rhime, but with disadvantage."

In the Life of SWIFT, it appears to me that Johnson had a certain degree of prejudice. Sheridan imputed it to a supposed apprehension in Johnson, that Swift had not been sufficiently active in obtaining for him an Irish degree, but of this there was not sufficient evidence. "A great mind disdains to hold any thing by courtesy, and therefore never usurps what a lawful claimant may take away. He that encroaches on another's dignity, puts himself in his power; he is either repelled with helpless indignity, or endured by clemency and condescension."

While the world in general was filled with admiration of Johnson's "Lives of the Poets," by some violent Whigs he was arraigned of injustice to Milton; by some Cambridge men of depreciating Gray; and his expressing what he really thought of Lord Lyttelton, produced a declaration of war against him from Mrs. Montagu. When I talked to him of the feeble, though shrill outcry which had been raised, "Sir, I considered myself as entrusted with a certain portion of truth. I have given my opinion sincerely; let them shew where they think me wrong."

TO THE HONOURABLE WARREN HASTINGS, ESQ.

"SIR,

"THOUGH I have had but little personal knowledge of you, I have had enough to make me wish for more; and though it be now a long time since I was honoured by your visit, I had too much pleasure from it to forget it. By those

whom we delight to remember, we are unwilling to be forgotten.

"That literature is not totally forsaking us, and that your favourite language is not neglected, will appear from the book, which I should have pleased myself more with sending, if I could have presented it bound: but time was wanting. I beg, however, Sir, that you will accept it from a man very desirous of your regard. SAM. JOHNSON."

I wrote, complaining of having been troubled by a recurrence of the perplexing question of Liberty and Necessity; —

TO BOSWELL.

"I HOPED you had got rid of all this hypocrisy of misery. What have you to do with Liberty and Necessity? Or what more than to hold your tongue about it? Do not doubt but I shall be most heartily glad to see you here again, for I love every part about you but your affectation of distress.

"I have at last finished my Lives, and have laid up for you a load of copy, all out of order, so that it will amuse you a long time to set it right. Come to me, my dear Bozzy, and let us be as happy as we can. We will go again to the Mitre, and talk old times over. SAM. JOHNSON."

I met him in Fleet-street, walking, or rather indeed moving along; for his peculiar march is thus described in a very just and picturesque manner, in a short Life of him published very soon after his death: — "When he walked the streets, what with the constant roll of his head, and the concomitant motion of his body, he appeared to make his way by that motion, independent of his feet." That he was often much stared at while he advanced in this manner, may easily be believed; but it was not safe to make sport of one so robust as he was. Mr. Langton saw him one day, in a fit of absence, by a sudden start, drive the load off a porter's back, and walk forward briskly, without being conscious of what he had done.

The porter was very angry, but stood still, and eyed the huge figure with much earnestness, till he was satisfied that his wisest course was to be quiet, and take up his burthen again.

He said he was engaged to go out in the morning. "Early, Sir?" said I. JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, a London morning does not go with the sun."

Mr. Thrale told me I might now have the pleasure to see Dr. Johnson drink wine again. The first evening that I was with him at Thrale's, I observed he poured a large quantity of it into a glass, and swallowed it greedily. Every thing about his character and manners was forcible and violent; there never was any moderation; many a day did he fast, many a year did he refrain from wine; but when he did eat, it was voraciously; when he did drink wine, it was copiously. He could practise abstinence, but not temperance.

He said, "Mrs. Montagu has dropt me. Now, Sir, there are people whom one should like very well to drop, but would not wish to be dropped by." He certainly was vain of the society of ladies, and could make himself very agreeable to them, when he chose it; Sir Joshua Reynolds agreed with me that he could. Dean Marlay wittily observed, "A lady may be vain, when she can turn a wolf-dog into a lap-dog."

Johnson and his friend Beauclerk were once together in company with several clergymen, who thought that they should appear to advantage, by assuming the lax jollity of *men of the world*. Johnson, who they expected would be *entertained*, sat grave and silent for some time; at last, turning to Beauclerk, he said, by no means in a whisper, "This merriment of parsons is mighty offensive."

Dr. Porteus observes of a reverend fop, that he "can be but *half a beau*."

Addison has given us a fine portrait of a clergyman, a member of his *Club*; and Johnson has exhibited a model, in the character of Mr. Mudge:

"The Reverend Mr. *Zachariah Mudge*, Prebendary of

Exeter, and Vicar of St. Andrew's in Plymouth; a man equally eminent for his virtues and abilities, and at once beloved as a companion and reverenced as a pastor.

"His principles both of thought and action were great and comprehensive. By a solicitous examination of objections, and judicious comparison of opposite arguments, he attained what enquiry never gives but to industry and perspicuity, a firm and unshaken settlement of conviction. But his firmness was without asperity; for, knowing with how much difficulty truth was sometimes found, he did not wonder that many missed it. His discharge of parochial duties was exemplary. His delivery detained the mind upon the subject, without directing it to the speaker. His acquaintance was universally solicited, and his presence obstructed no enjoyment which religion did not forbid."

The Cornish fishermen drink *Mahogany*, made of two parts gin, and one part treacle, well beaten together. I said it was a counterpart of what is called *Athol Porridge* in the Highlands of Scotland, which is a mixture of whisky and honey. Johnson said, "That must be a better liquor than the Cornish, for both its component parts are better." He also observed, "*Mahogany* must be a modern name; for it is not long since the wood called mahogany was known in this country." I mentioned his scale of liquors: — claret for boys, — port for men, — brandy for heroes. "Then (said Mr. Burke,) let me have claret: I love to be a boy; to have the careless gaiety of boyish days." JOHNSON. "I should drink claret too, if it would give me that; but it does not: it neither makes boys men, nor men boys. You'll be drowned by it, before it has any effect upon you."

I ventured to mention a ludicrous paragraph in the newspapers, that Dr. Johnson was learning to dance of Vestris. Lord Charlemont, wishing to excite him to talk, proposed in a whisper, that he should be asked, whether it was true. "Shall I ask him?" said his Lordship. We were, by a great majority, clear for the experiment. Upon which his Lordship very gravely, and with a courteous air said, "Pray, Sir, is it true

that you are taking lessons of Vestris?" This was risking a good deal, and required the boldness of a General of Irish Volunteers to make the attempt. Johnson was at first startled, and in some heat answered, "How can your Lordship ask so simple a question?" But immediately recovering himself, whether from unwillingness to be deceived, or to appear deceived, or whether from real good humour, he kept up the joke: "Nay, but if any body were to answer the paragraph, and contradict it, I'd have a reply, and would say, that he who contradicted it was no friend either to Vestris or me. For why should not Dr. Johnson add to his other powers a little corporeal agility? Socrates learnt to dance at an advanced age, and Cato learnt Greek at an advanced age. Then it might proceed to say, that this Johnson, not content with dancing on the ground, might dance on the rope; and they might introduce the elephant dancing on the rope. A nobleman wrote a play, called 'Love in a hollow Tree.' He found out that it was a bad one, and therefore wished to buy up all the copies, and burn them. The Duchess of Marlborough had kept one; and when he was against her at an election, she had a new edition of it printed, and prefixed to it, as a frontispiece, an elephant dancing on a rope; to shew that his Lordship's writing comedy was as awkward as an elephant dancing on a rope."

Sir Philip Jennings Clerk wore his own white hair in a bag of goodly size, a black velvet coat, with an embroidered waistcoat, and very rich laced ruffles; which Mrs. Thrale said were old fashioned. "Ah, Sir, (said Johnson,) ancient ruffles and modern principles do not agree." Sir Philip defended the Opposition to the American war ably and with temper, and I joined him. He said, the majority of the nation was against the ministry. JOHNSON. "*I*, Sir, am against the ministry; but it is for having too little of that, of which Opposition thinks they have too much. Were I minister, if any man wagged his finger against me, he should be turned out. If you will not oppose at the expence of losing your place, your opposition will not be honest."

Mrs. Thrale gave high praise to Mr. Dudley Long (now North). JOHNSON. "Nay, my dear lady, don't talk so. Mr. Long's character is very *short*. It is nothing. He fills a chair. He is a man of genteel appearance, and that is all. I know nobody who blasts by praise as you do: when there is exaggerated praise, every body is set against a character. They are provoked to attack it. Now there is Pepys; you praised that man with such disproportion, that I was incited to lessen him, perhaps more than he deserves. His blood is upon your head. By the same principle, your malice defeats itself; for your censure is too violent. And yet (looking to her with a leering smile) she is the first woman in the world, could she but restrain that wicked tongue of hers; — she would be the only woman, could she but command that little whirligig."

I took the liberty to say, that I thought there might be very high praise given to a known character which deserved it, and therefore it would not be exaggerated. Thus, one might say of Mr. Edmund Burke, he is a very wonderful man. JOHNSON. "No, Sir. Even Burke would suffer, not from any fault of his own, but from your folly."

Mrs. Thrale mentioned a gentleman who had acquired a fortune of four thousand a year in trade, but was absolutely miserable, because he could not talk in company; so miserable, that he was impelled to lament his situation in the street to ——, whom he hates, and who he knows despises him. "I am a most unhappy man (said he). I am invited to conversations. I go to conversations; but, alas! I have no conversation." — JOHNSON. "Man commonly cannot be successful in different ways. This gentleman has spent, in getting four thousand pounds a year, the time in which he might have learnt to talk; and now he cannot talk." Mr. Perkins° made a shrewd and droll remark: "If he had got his four thousand a year as a mountebank, he might have learnt to talk at the same time that he was getting his fortune."

Some other gentlemen came in. The conversation concerning the person whose character Dr. Johnson had treated so

slightingly, as he did not know his merit, was resumed. Mrs. Thrale said, "You think so of him, Sir, because he is quiet, and does not exert himself with force. You'll be saying the same thing of Mr. —— there, who sits as quiet—." This was not well bred; and Johnson did not let it pass without correction. "Nay, Madam, what right have you to talk thus? Both Mr. —— and I have reason to take it ill. *You* may talk so of Mr. ——; but why do you make *me* do it? Have I said anything against Mr. ——? You have *set* him, that I might shoot him: but I have not shot him."

Mr. Thrale appeared very lethargick to-day. I saw him again on Monday evening, at which time he was not thought to be in immediate danger; but early in the morning of Wednesday, he expired. Johnson was in the house, and thus mentions the event: "I felt almost the last flutter of his pulse, and looked for the last time upon the face that for fifteen years had never been turned upon me but with respect and benignity." Upon that day there was a *Call* of the LITERARY CLUB; but Johnson apologised for his absence by the following note:

"MR. JOHNSON knows that Sir Joshua Reynolds and the other gentlemen will excuse his incompliance with the Call, when they are told that Mr. Thrale died this morning."

His friends of the CLUB were in hopes that Mr. Thrale might have made a liberal provision for him, which, as Mr. Thrale left no son, and a very large fortune, it would have been highly to his honour to have done; but he bequeathed him only two hundred pounds, the legacy given to each of his executors. I could not but be somewhat diverted by hearing Johnson talk in a pompous manner of his new office. Lord Lucan tells a very good story, which is certainly characteristical: that when the sale of Thrale's brewery was going forward, Johnson appeared bustling about, with an ink-horn and pen in his button-hole, like an excise-man; and on being asked what he really considered to be the value of the property which was

to be disposed of, answered, "We are not here to sell a parcel of boilers and vats, but the potentiality of growing rich beyond the dreams of avarice."

He carried me to dine at a club, which, at his desire, had been lately formed at the Queen's Arms, in St. Paul's Churchyard. He told Mr. Hoole, that he wished to have a *City Club*, and asked him to collect one; but, said he, "Don't let them be *patriots*." He said he was glad Lord George Gordon had escaped, rather than that a precedent should be established for hanging a man for *constructive treason*.

Johnson defended the oriental regulation of different *casts* of men. "The Bramins are the mastiffs of mankind."

I have preserved his ingenious defence of his dining twice abroad in Passion-week; a laxity, in which I am convinced he would not have indulged himself at the time when he wrote his solemn paper in "The Rambler." "Your general character may be more hurt by preciseness than by dining with a Bishop in Passion-week. There might be a handle for reflection. It might be said, 'He refuses to dine with a Bishop in Passion-week, but was three Sundays absent from church.' You might do more harm by lessening the influence of a Bishop's character by your disapprobation in refusing him, than by going to him."

Johnson produced now, for the first time, some handsome silver salvers, which he told me he had bought fourteen years ago; so it was a great day. I was not a little amused by observing Allen perpetually struggling to talk in the manner of Johnson, like the little frog in the fable blowing himself up to resemble the stately ox.

Mrs. Hall talked of the resurrection of the human race in general, and maintained that we shall be raised with the same bodies. JOHNSON. "Nay, Madam, we see that it is not to be the same body; for the Scripture uses the illustration of grain sown, and we know that the grain which grows is not the same with what is sown. You cannot suppose that we shall rise with a diseased body; it is enough if there be such a sameness as to distinguish identity of person."

Of apparitions he observed, "A total disbelief of them is adverse to the opinion of the existence of the soul between death and the last day; the question simply is, whether departed spirits ever have the power of making themselves perceptible to us: a man who thinks he has seen an apparition, can only be convinced himself; his authority will not convince another; and his conviction, if rational, must be founded on being told something which cannot be known but by supernatural means."

He mentioned a thing as not unfrequent — being *called*. Dr. Johnson said, that one day at Oxford, as he was turning the key of his chamber, he heard his mother distinctly call — *Sam*. She was then at Lichfield; but nothing ensued.

Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Hall were both together striving to answer him. He grew angry, and called out loudly, "Nay, when you both speak at once, it is intolerable." But checking himself, and softening, "This one may say, though you *are* ladies." Then in gay humour, addressed them in the words of the song in "The Beggar's Opera:"

"But two at a time there's no mortal can bear."

"What, Sir, (said I,) are you going to turn Captain Macheath?" The contrast between Macheath, Polly and Lucy — and Dr. Samuel Johnson, blind, peevish Mrs. Williams, and lean, lank, preaching Mrs. Hall," was exquisite.

Mrs. Garrick, whose grief for the loss of her husband was, I believe, as sincere as wounded affection and admiration could produce, had a select party of his friends to dine with her. The company was, Miss Hannah More, who lived with her, and whom she called her Chaplain; Mrs. Boscawen, Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Dr. Burney, Dr. Johnson, and myself. We found ourselves very elegantly entertained at her house in the Adelphi, where I have passed many a pleasing hour with him "who gladdened life."

We were regaled with Lichfield ale, which had a peculiar

appropriate value. Sir Joshua, and Dr. Burney, and I drank cordially of it to Dr. Johnson's health; and though he would not join us, he as cordially answered, "Gentlemen, I wish you all as well as you do me."

One of the company mentioned Mr. Thomas Hollis, the strenuous Whig, who used to send over Europe presents of democratical books, with their boards stamped with daggers and caps of liberty. Mrs. Carter said, "He was a bad man: he used to talk uncharitably." JOHNSON. "Poh! poh! Madam; who is the worse for being talked of uncharitably?"

Mrs. Carter said, "I doubt he was an Atheist." JOHNSON. "I don't know that. He might perhaps have become one, if he had had time to ripen (smiling). He might have *exuberated* into an Atheist."

"I love 'Blair's Sermons.' Though the dog is a Scotchman, and a Presbyterian, and everything he should not be, I was the first to praise them. Such was my candour" (smiling). MRS. BOSCAWEN. "Such his great merit, to get the better of your prejudices." JOHNSON. "Why, Madam, let us compound the matter; let us ascribe it to my candour, and his merit."

He and I walked away together; we stopped a little while by the rails of the Adelphi, looking on the Thames, and I said to him with some emotion, that I was now thinking of two friends we had lost, who once lived in the buildings behind us, Beauclerk and Garrick. "Ay, Sir, (said he, tenderly,) and two such friends as cannot be supplied."

I had the pleasure of again dining with him and Mr. Wilkes, at Mr. Dilly's. No *negociation* was now required to bring them together; Wilkes was this day seated between Dr. Beattie and Dr. Johnson (between *Truth* and *Reason*, as General Paoli said, when I told him of it). WILKES. "Pray, Boswell, how much may be got in a year by an Advocate at the Scotch bar?" BOSWELL. "I believe, two thousand pounds." WILKES. "How can it be possible to spend that money in Scotland?" JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, the money may be spent in England; but there is a harder question. If one man

in Scotland gets possession of two thousand pounds, what remains for all the rest of the nation?" WILKES. "You know, in the last war, the immense booty which Thurot carried off by the complete plunder of seven Scotch isles; he re-embarked with *three and six-pence.*"

The subject of quotation being introduced, Mr. Wilkes censured it as pedantry. JOHNSON. "No, Sir, it is a good thing; there is a community of mind in it. Classical quotation is the *parole* of literary men all over the world."

JOHNSON. "It is now become so much the fashion to publish letters, that, in order to avoid it, I put as little into mine as I can." He gave us an entertaining account of *Bet Flint*, a woman of the town, who was taken up on a charge of stealing a counterpane, and tried at the Old Bailey. Chief Justice —— summed up favourably, and she was acquitted. After which, Bet said, with a gay and satisfied air, "Now that the counterpane is *my own*, I shall make a petticoat of it."

Talking of oratory, Mr. Wilkes described it as accompanied with all the charms of poetical expression. JOHNSON. "No, Sir; oratory is the power of beating down your adversary's arguments, and putting better in their place." WILKES. "But this does not move the passions." JOHNSON. "He must be a weak man who is to be so moved."

Mr. Wilkes observed, how tenacious we are of forms in this country; and gave as an instance, the vote of the House of Commons for remitting money to pay the army in America *in Portugal pieces*, when, in reality, the remittance is made not in Portugal money, but in our specie. JOHNSON. "Is there not a law, Sir, against exporting the current coin of the realm?" WILKES. "Yes, Sir; but might not the House of Commons order our own current coin to be sent into our own colonies?" — Here Johnson gave the *Middlesex Patriot* an admirable retort upon his own ground. "Sure, Sir, *you* don't think a *resolution of the House of Commons* equal to the *law of the land.*" WILKES. (at once perceiving the application)° "GOD forbid, Sir."

Mr. Wilkes said to me, loud enough for Dr. Johnson to

hear, "Dr. Johnson should make me a present of his 'Lives of the Poets,' as I am a poor patriot, who cannot afford to buy them." Johnson seemed to take no notice of this hint; but in a little while, he called to Mr. Dilly, "Pray, Sir, be so good as to send a set of my Lives to Mr. Wilkes, with my compliments." This was accordingly done; and Mr. Wilkes paid Dr. Johnson a visit, was courteously received, and sat with him a long time.

The company gradually dropped away. Mr. Dilly himself was called down stairs upon business; I left the room for some time; when I returned, I was struck with observing Dr. Samuel Johnson and John Wilkes, Esq. literally *tête-à-tête;* for they were reclined upon their chairs, with their heads leaning almost close to each other, and talking earnestly, in a kind of confidential whisper, of the personal quarrel between George the Second and the King of Prussia. Such a scene of perfectly easy sociality between two such opponents in the war of political controversy would have been an excellent subject for a picture. It presented to my mind the happy days which are foretold in Scripture, when the lion shall lie down with the kid.

It was much the fashion for several ladies to have evening assemblies, where the fair sex might participate in conversation with literary and ingenious men. These societies were denominated *Blue-stocking Clubs*. One of the most eminent members was Mr. Stillingfleet, who wore blue stockings. Such was the excellence of his conversation, that it used to be said, "We can do nothing without the *blue-stockings;*" and thus by degrees the title was established. Miss Hannah More has admirably described a *Blue-stocking Club*, in her "*Bas Bleu.*"

Miss Monckton used to have the finest *bit of blue* at the house of her mother, Lady Galway. Her vivacity enchanted the Sage, and they used to talk together with all imaginable ease. She insisted that some of Sterne's writings were very pathetick. Johnson bluntly denied it. "I am sure (said she,) they have affected *me*." — "Why (said Johnson, smiling,

and rolling himself about) that is, because, dearest, you're a dunce." When she sometimes afterwards mentioned this to him, he said with equal truth and politeness: "Madam, if I had thought so, I certainly should not have said it."

At the Duke of Montrose's his grace had circulated the bottle very freely. I went to Miss Monckton's, where I placed myself next to Johnson, and talked to him in a loud and boisterous manner, desirous to let the company know how I could contend with *Ajax*. "What, Sir, supposing I were to fancy that the —— (naming the most charming Duchess in his Majesty's dominions) were in love with me, should I not be very happy?" My friend kept me as quiet as possible; but it may easily be conceived how he must have felt. However, when I made an apology, he behaved with the most friendly gentleness.

In 1763, a young bookseller, Mr. Whiston, waited on him with a subscription to his "Shakspeare:" and observing that the Doctor made no entry of the subscriber's name, ventured diffidently to ask, whether he would please to have the gentleman's address, that it might be properly inserted in the printed list of subscribers. — "*I shall print no List of Subscribers;*" said Johnson, with great abruptness: but almost immediately recollecting himself, added, very complacently, "Sir, I have two very cogent reasons for not printing any list of subscribers; — one, that I have lost all the names, — the other, that I have spent all the money."

Johnson could not brook appearing to be worsted in argument, even when he had taken the wrong side. When, therefore, he perceived that his opponent gained ground, he had recourse to some sudden mode of robust sophistry. Once when I was pressing upon him with visible advantage, he stopped me thus: — "My dear Boswell, let's have no more of this; you'll make nothing of it. I'd rather have you whistle a Scotch tune."

He had all his life habituated himself to consider conversation as a trial of intellectual vigour and skill. As a proof

at once of his eagerness for colloquial distinction, he once addressed an eminent friend thus: "——, we now have been several hours together; and you have said but one thing for which I envied you."

Dr. Shaw, the great traveller, used to say, "I hate a *cui bono*° man." Upon being asked what he should think of a man who was apt to say *non est tanti;* — "That he's a stupid fellow, Sir, (answered Johnson): What would these *tanti* men be doing the while?" When I in a low-spirited fit, was enquiring a *reason* for taking so much trouble; "Sir (said he, in an animated tone) it is driving on the system of life."

Dr. Shebbeare deserves to be remembered for his "Letters on the English Nation," under the name of "Battista Angeloni, Jesuit." Johnson and Shebbeare° were frequently named together, as having in former reigns had no predilection for the family of Hanover.

A project for having a third Theatre in London solely for new plays, in order to deliver authours from the supposed tyranny of managers, Johnson treated slightingly; upon which Goldsmith said, "Ay, ay, this may be nothing to you, who can now shelter yourself behind the corner of a pension;" and Johnson bore this with good-humour.

"Always, Sir, set a high value on spontaneous kindness. He whose inclination prompts him to cultivate your friendship of his own accord, will love you more than one whom you have been at pains to attach to you."

He was pleased that a carpenter, who lived near him, was very ready to shew him some things in his business which he wished to see: "It was paying (said he,) respect to literature."

I asked him, if he was not dissatisfied with having so small a share of wealth. He had only a pension of three hundred a year. Why was he not in such circumstances as to keep his coach? JOHNSON. "Sir, I have never complained of the world; nor do I think that I have reason to complain. It is rather to be wondered at that I have so much. My pension is more out of the usual course of things than any instance that

I have known. Here, Sir, was a man avowedly no friend to Government at the time, who got a pension without asking for it. I never courted the great; they sent for me; but I think they now give me up. They are satisfied: they have seen enough of me. No, Sir; great Lords and great Ladies don't love to have their mouths stopped."

Mrs. Thrale justly and wittily accounted for such conduct by saying, that Johnson's conversation was by much too strong for a person accustomed to obsequiousness and flattery; it was *mustard in a young child's mouth!*

JOHNSON. "A wise Tory and a wise Whig, I believe, will agree. Their principles are the same, though their modes of thinking are different. A high Tory makes government unintelligible: it is lost in the clouds. A violent Whig makes it impracticable: he is for allowing so much liberty to every man, that there is not power enough to govern any man. The prejudice of the Tory is for establishment; The prejudice of the Whig is for innovation."

Dr. Johnson agreed to be of the party this year, with Mr. Charles Dilly and me, and to go and see Lord Bute's seat at Luton Hoe. He talked little in the carriage, being chiefly occupied in reading Dr. Watson's "Chemical Essays," and his own "Prince of Abyssinia," having told us, that he had not looked at it since it was first published. I happened to take it out of my pocket this day, and he seized upon it with avidity.

At Welwin I wished much to see, in company with Johnson, the residence of the authour of "Night Thoughts," then possessed by his son, Mr. Young. Here some address was requisite. I therefore concerted with Mr. Dilly, that I should steal away from Dr. Johnson and him, and try what reception I could procure. I hastened to Mr. Young's, and found he was at home. I begged pardon for presuming to trouble him, but that I wished much to see his place, if he would give me leave; "By all means, Sir; we are just going to drink tea; will you sit down?" I thanked him, but said that Dr. Johnson had come with me from London, and I must return to the inn to

drink tea with him. "Sir, (said he), I should think it a great honour to see Dr. Johnson here. Will you allow me to send for him?" I said that "I would go myself and bring him, when he had drunk tea; he knew nothing of my calling here." I hastened back to the inn, and informed Dr. Johnson that "Mr. Young, son of Dr. Young, the authour of 'Night Thoughts,' whom I had just left, desired to have the honour of seeing him at the house where his father lived." Dr. Johnson luckily made no enquiry how this invitation had arisen, but agreed to go, and when we entered Mr. Young's parlour, he addressed him with a very polite bow, "Sir, I had a curiosity to come and see this place. I had the honour to know that great man, your father."

We sat some time in the summer-house, on the outside wall of which was inscribed, "*Ambulantes in horto audiebant vocem Dei.*" We went into the church, and looked at the monument erected by Mr. Young to his father.

"Do not, Sir," said Johnson, "accustom yourself to trust to *impressions*. There is a middle state of mind between conviction and hypocrisy, of which many are unconscious. By trusting to impressions, a man may gradually come to yield to them, and at length be subject to them, so as not to be a free agent, or what is the same thing in effect, to *suppose* that he is not a free agent."

Dr. Gibbons, the Dissenting minister, being mentioned, he said, "I took to Dr. Gibbons. Tell him, if he'll call on me, and dawdle over a dish of tea in an afternoon, I shall take it kind."

"I wish that I had copies of all the pamphlets written against me, as it is said Pope had. Had I known that I should make so much noise in the world, I should have been at pains to collect them. I believe there is hardly a day in which there is not something about me in the news-papers."

When shewn the botanical garden, "Is not *every* garden a botanical garden?" When told that there was a shrubbery to the extent of several miles: "That is making a very foolish use of the ground; a little of it is very well." When it was proposed that we should walk on the pleasure-ground;

"Don't let us fatigue ourselves. Why should we walk there? Here's a fine tree, let's get to the top of it." But upon the whole, he was very much pleased. He said, "This is one of the places I do not regret having come to see."

I put him in mind of his promise to favour me with a copy of his celebrated Letter to the Earl of Chesterfield, and he was at last pleased to comply, by dictating from his memory. There was an animated glow in his countenance while he thus recalled his high-minded indignation.

"If every attempt," said he, "however light or ludicrous, to lessen another's reputation, is to be punished by a judicial sentence, what punishment can be sufficiently severe for him who attempts to diminish the reputation of the Supreme Court of Justice, by reclaiming upon a cause already determined, without any change in the state of the question? Does it not imply hopes that the Judges will change their opinion? Is not uncertainty and inconstancy in the highest degree disreputable to a Court? Does it not suppose that the former judgement was temerarious or negligent? Does it not lessen the confidence of the publick? Will not he who knows himself wrong to-day, hope that the Courts of Justice will think him right to-morrow?"

I mentioned a friend of mine having resolved never to marry a pretty woman. JOHNSON. "Sir, it is a very foolish resolution. Beauty is of itself very estimable. No, Sir, I would prefer a pretty woman, unless there are objections to her. A pretty woman may be foolish; a pretty woman may be wicked; a pretty woman may not like me. But there is no such danger in marrying a pretty woman as is apprehended; she will not be persecuted if she does not invite persecution. A pretty woman, if she has a mind to be wicked, can find a readier way than another; and that is all."

TO BENNET LANGTON.

"YOU will, perhaps, be glad to hear, that Mrs. Thrale is disincumbered of her brewhouse; and that it seemed to the purchaser so far from an evil, that he was content to give for

it an hundred and thirty-five thousand pounds. Is the nation ruined? SAM. JOHNSON."

Johnson's charity to the poor was uniform and extensive, judicious as well as humane. When he asked money for persons in distress, and Mr. Metcalfe offered what Johnson thought too much, he insisted on taking less, saying, "No, no, Sir; we must not *pamper* them."

A friend of Dr. Burney's, the late Mr. Bewley, the *Philosopher of Massingham*, had conceived such a reverence for him, that he earnestly begged Dr. Burney to give him the cover of the first letter he received as a relick. When Dr. Burney visited Dr. Johnson at the Temple, finding himself alone, he examined the contents of the apartment, to try whether he could undiscovered steal any thing to send to his friend Bewley, as another relick of the admirable Dr. Johnson. Finding nothing better to his purpose, he cut some bristles off his hearthbroom, and enclosed them in a letter to his country enthusiast, who received them with due reverence.

In one of his little memorandum-books is the following minute:

"August 9, 3 P.M. ætat. 72, in the summer-house at Streatham.

"After innumerable resolutions formed and neglected, I have retired hither, to plan a life of greater diligence.

"My purpose is,

"To pass eight hours every day in some serious employment.

"Having prayed, I purpose to employ the next six weeks upon the Italian language, for my settled study."

"I am glad the ministry is removed.° Such a bunch of imbecility never disgraced a country. If they sent a messenger into the City to take up a printer, the messenger was taken up instead of the printer, and committed by the sitting Alderman. If they sent one army to the relief of another, the first army was defeated and taken before the second arrived. I will not say that what they did was always wrong; but it was always done at a wrong time."

To Captain Langton.

"Of my life, from the time we parted, the history is mournful. The spring of last year deprived me of Thrale, a man whose eye for fifteen years had scarcely been turned upon me but with respect or tenderness; for such another friend, the general course of human things will not suffer man to hope. I passed the Summer at Streatham, but there was no Thrale; and having idled away the summer with a weakly body and neglected mind, I made a journey to Staffordshire on the edge of winter. The season was dreary, I was sickly, and found the friends sickly whom I went to see. After a sorrowful sojourn, I returned to a habitation possessed for the present by two sick women, where my dear old friend, Mr. Levet, to whom as he used to tell me, I owe your acquaintance, died a few weeks ago, suddenly in his bed; there passed not, I believe, a minute between health and death. At night, as at Mrs. Thrale's I was musing in my chamber, I thought with uncommon earnestness, that however I might alter my mode of life, or whithersoever I might remove, I would endeavour to retain Levet about me; in the morning my servant brought me word that Levet was called to another state, a state for which, I think, he was not unprepared, for he was very useful to the poor. How much soever I valued him, I now wish that I had valued him more. Sam. Johnson."

Some obscure scribbler had published at Edinburgh, what he called "The Deformities of Johnson."

To Boswell.

"The pleasure which we used to receive from each other on Good-Friday and Easter-day, we must be this year content to miss.

"I am sorry to find, what your solicitations seem to imply, that you have already gone the whole length of your credit. This is to set the quiet of your whole life at hazard. If you anticipate your inheritance, you can at last inherit nothing

Live on what you have; live if you can on less; do not borrow either for vanity or pleasure; the vanity will end in shame, and the pleasure in regret: stay therefore at home, till you have saved money for your journey hither.

"'The Beauties of Johnson' are said to have got money to the collector; if the 'Deformities' have the same success, I shall be still a more extensive benefactor."

"Poverty takes away so many means of doing good, and produces so much inability to resist evil, both natural and moral, that it is by all virtuous means to be avoided. Of riches it is not necessary to write the praise. Let it, however, be remembered, that he who has money to spare, has it always in his power to benefit others; and of such power a good man must always be desirous. SAM. JOHNSON."

To Mr. Perkins.

"OBSERVE these rules:

"1. Turn all care out of your head as soon as you mount the chaise.

"2. Do not think about frugality; your health is worth more than it can cost.

"3. Do not continue any day's journey to fatigue.

"4. Take now and then a day's rest.

"5. Get a smart sea sickness, if you can.

"6. Cast away all anxiety, and keep your mind easy.

"This last direction is the principal; with an unquiet mind, neither exercise, nor diet, nor physick, can be of much use."

To Boswell.°

"LIFE, as Cowley seems to say, ought to resemble a well-ordered poem; of which one rule generally received is, that the exordium should be simple, and should promise little. Do not think your estate your own, while any man can call upon you for money which you cannot pay; therefore, begin with timorous parsimony.

"I am afraid that health begins, after seventy, and long before, to have a meaning different from that which it had at thirty. But it is culpable to murmur at the established order of the creation, as it is vain to oppose it. He that lives, must grow old; and he that would rather grow old than die, has GOD to thank for the infirmities of old age. SAM. JOHNSON."

The death of Mr. Thrale had made a very material alteration with respect to Johnson's reception in that family. The manly authority of the husband no longer curbed the lively exuberance of the lady; and as her vanity had been fully gratified, by having the Colossus of Literature attached to her for many years, she gradually became less assiduous to please him. It is plain that Johnson's penetration was alive to her neglect or forced attention; for on the 6th of October, 1782, we find him making a "parting use of the library" at Streatham, and pronouncing a prayer, which he composed on leaving Mr. Thrale's family.

"Almighty GOD, Father of all mercy, help me by thy grace, that I may, with humble and sincere thankfulness, remember the comforts and conveniencies which I have enjoyed at this place; and that I may resign them with holy submission, equally trusting in thy protection when Thou givest, and when Thou takest away. Have mercy upon me, O LORD, have mercy upon me.

"To thy fatherly protection, O LORD, I commend this family. Bless, guide, and defend them, that they may so pass through this world, as finally to enjoy in thy presence everlasting happiness, for JESUS CHRIST'S sake. Amen."

In one of his memorandum-books I find "Sunday, went to church at Streatham. *Templo valedixi ° cum osculo.*"

Mr. Metcalfe sent him a note that he might have the use of his carriage whenever he pleased. Johnson returned this polite answer: — "Mr. Johnson is very much obliged by the kind offer of the carriage, but he has no desire of using Mr. Metcalfe's carriage, except when he can have the pleasure of Mr. Metcalfe's company."

I was glad to find him at Mrs. Thrale's house, appearances of friendship between them being still kept up. I was shewn into his room. He said, "I am glad you are come: I am very ill." Seeing me now for the first time as a *Laird*, or proprietor of land, he began thus: "Sir, the superiority of a country-gentleman over the people upon his estate is very agreeable: and he who says he does not feel it to be agreeable, lies; for it must be agreeable to have a casual superiority over those who are by nature equal with us."

"Sir, (said he, in a low voice, having come nearer to me, while his old prejudices seemed to be fermenting in his mind), this Hanoverian family is *isolée* here. They have no friends."

Talking of conversation, he said, "There must, in the first place, be knowledge, there must be materials; — in the second place, there must be a command of words; — in the third place, there must be imagination, to place things in such views as they are not commonly seen in; — and in the fourth place, there must be presence of mind, and a resolution that is not to be overcome by failures; this last is an essential requisite; for want of it many people do not excel in conversation. Now *I* want it; I throw up the game upon losing a trick." — "I don't know, Sir, how this may be; but I am sure you beat other people's cards out of their hands." While he went on talking triumphantly, I said to Mrs. Thrale, "O, for short-hand to take this down!" — "You'll carry it all in your head, (said she); a long head is as good as short-hand."

"Fox never talks in private company. A man who is used to the applause of the House of Commons, has no wish for that of a private company. A man accustomed to throw for a thousand pounds, if set down to throw for sixpence, would not be at the pains to count his dice. Burke's talk is the ebullition of his mind; he does not talk from a desire of distinction, but because his mind is full."

He thus characterized one of our old acquaintances: "[Sheridan] is a good man, Sir; but he is a vain man and a liar. He, however, only tells lies of vanity; of victories, for instance, in conversation, which never happened." This

alluded to a story which I had repeated from that gentleman, to entertain Johnson with its wild bravado: "This Johnson, Sir, (said he), whom you are all afraid of, will shrink, if you come close to him in argument, and roar as loud as he. He once maintained the paradox, that there is no beauty but in utility. 'Sir, (said I), what say you to the peacock's tail, which is one of the most beautiful objects in nature.' He *felt* what I thus produced, and had recourse to his usual expedient, ridicule; exclaiming, 'A peacock has a tail, and a fox has a tail;' and then he burst out into a laugh.—'Well, Sir, (said I, with a strong voice, looking him full in the face), you have unkennelled your fox; pursue him if you dare.' He had not a word to say, Sir."—Johnson told me, that this was fiction from beginning to end.

He said, "I wonder how I should have any enemies; for I do harm to nobody." Boswell. "In the first place, Sir, you will be pleased to recollect, that you set out with attacking the Scotch; so you got a whole nation for your enemies." Johnson. "Why, I own, that by my definition of *oats* I meant to vex them." Boswell. "Pray, Sir, can you trace the cause of your antipathy to the Scotch?" Johnson. "I cannot, Sir." Boswell. "Old Mr. Sheridan says, it was because they sold Charles the First." Johnson. "Then, Sir, old Mr. Sheridan has found out a very good reason."

He was but an unruly patient, for Sir Lucas Pepys said, "If you were *tractable*, Sir, I should prescribe for you."

Johnson. The King is as much oppressed as a man can be. If he plays one against another, he *wins* nothing."

Johnson seemed much relieved, having taken opium. He protested against it, as a remedy that should be given only in extreme necessity. I mentioned how commonly it was used in Turkey. He grew warm. "Turks take opium, but Russell tells us that it is as disgraceful in Turkey to take too much opium, as it is with us to get drunk. Sir, it is amazing how things are exaggerated."

Mrs. Desmoulins made tea; and she and I talked before him upon his not complaining of the world, because he was

not called to some great office, nor had attained to great wealth. He flew into a violent passion. "Nobody, (said he), has a right to talk in this manner, to bring before a man his own character, and the events of his life, when he does not choose it should be done. I never have sought the world; the world was not to seek me."

He was somewhat fretful from his illness. A gentleman asked him whether he had been abroad to-day. "Don't talk so childishly (said he). You may as well ask if I hanged myself to-day." I mentioned politicks. JOHNSON. "Sir, I'd as soon have a man to break my bones as talk to me of public affairs, internal or external. I have lived to see things all as bad as they can be."

He said, "Goldsmith's blundering speech to Lord Shelburne was only a blunder in emphasis: — 'I wonder they should call your Lordship *Malagrida*, for Malagrida was a very good man;' — meant, I wonder they should use *Malagrida* as a term of reproach."

He had revised "The Village," by the Reverend Mr. Crabbe. Its sentiments as to the false notions of rustick happiness and rustick virtue, were quite congenial with his own.

Dr. Brocklesby mentioned a gentleman, who became extremely penurious near the close of his life. Johnson said there must have been a degree of madness. "Not at all, Sir, (said Dr. Brocklesby), his judgement was entire." Unluckily, however, he mentioned that although he had a fortune of twenty-seven thousand pounds, he denied himself many comforts. "Nay, Sir, (cried Johnson), when the judgement is so disturbed that a man cannot count, that is pretty well."

"Raising the wages of day-labourers is wrong; for it does not make them live better, but only makes them idler."

"Keeping accounts, Sir, is of no use when a man is spending his own money, and has nobody to whom he is to account. You won't eat less beef to-day, because you have written down what it cost yesterday."

Talking of an acquaintance of ours, whose narratives, which

abounded in curious and interesting topicks, were unhappily found to be very fabulous, Lord Mansfield said, "Suppose we believe one *half* of what he tells." JOHNSON. "Ay; but we don't know *which* half to believe. By his lying we lose not only our reverence for him, but all comfort in his conversation." BOSWELL. "May we not take it as amusing fiction?" JOHNSON. "Sir, the misfortune is, that you will insensibly believe as much of it as you incline to believe."

"Depend upon it, Sir, it is when you come close to a man in conversation, that you discover what his real abilities are; to make a speech in a publick assembly is a knack. Now I honour Thurlow, Sir; Thurlow is a fine fellow; he fairly puts his mind to yours."

I said, "It is a pity, Sir, you don't always remember your own good things, that you may have a laugh when you will." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, it is better that I forget them, that I may be reminded of them, and have a laugh on their being brought to my recollection."

I recalled to him his having said as we sailed up Loch-lomond, "That if he wore any thing fine, it should be *very* fine." JOHNSON. "Depend upon it, Sir, every man will have as fine a thing as he can get; as large a diamond for his ring."

I told him I should send some "Essays," which I had written, which I hoped he would be so good as to read, and pick out the good ones. JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, send me only the good ones; don't make *me* pick them."

I was going to sup at Mr. Beauclerk's. He said, "I'll go with you." After having walked part of the way, seeming to recollect something, he suddenly stopped and said, "I cannot go, — but *I do not love Beauclerk the less.*"

On the frame of his portrait, Mr. Beauclerk had inscribed,

"————Ingenium ingens°
Inculto latet hoc sub corpore."

After Mr. Beauclerk's death, when it became Mr. Langton's property, he made the inscription be defaced. Johnson said

complacently, "It was kind in you to take it off;" and then after a short pause, added, "and not unkind in him to put it on."

He said, "How few of his friends' houses would a man choose to be at, when he is sick!" He mentioned one or two. I recollect only Thrale's.

He observed, "There is a wicked inclination in most people to suppose an old man decayed in his intellects. If a young or middle-aged man, when leaving a company, does not recollect where he laid his hat, it is nothing; but if the same inattention is discovered in an old man, people will shrug up their shoulders, and say, 'His memory is going.'"

Johnson thought the poems published as translations from Ossian, had little merit, "Sir, a man might write such stuff for ever, if he would *abandon* his mind to it."

He said, "A man should pass a part of his time with *the laughers*, by which means any thing ridiculous or particular about him might be presented to his view, and corrected." He must have been a bold laugher who would have ventured to tell Dr. Johnson of any of his particularities.

Dr. Goldsmith once said to Dr. Johnson, that he wished for some additional members to the LITERARY CLUB, to give it an agreeable variety; for (said he), there can now be nothing new among us: we have travelled over one another's minds. Johnson seemed a little angry, "Sir, you have not travelled over *my* mind, I promise you." Sir Joshua, however, thought Goldsmith right; observing, that "when people have lived a great deal together, they know what each of them will say on every subject. A new understanding, therefore, is desirable. Colouring is of much effect in every thing else as well as in painting."

Johnson used to say that he made it a constant rule to talk as well as he could, both as to sentiment and expression. Sir Joshua observed, that his common conversation in all companies was such as to secure him universal attention, as something above the usual colloquial style was expected. Yet, when another mode was necessary, in order to investigate

truth, Johnson could descend to a language intelligible to the meanest capacity. At an examination of a little blackguard boy, by Mr. Saunders Welch, the late Westminster Justice, Welch, who imagined that he was exalting himself in Dr. Johnson's eyes by using big words, spoke in a manner that was utterly unintelligible to the boy; Dr. Johnson perceiving it, addressed himself to the boy, and changed the pompous phraseology into colloquial language. Johnson said that he was always obliged to *translate* the Justice's swelling diction, (smiling,) so as that his meaning might be understood by the vulgar, from whom information was to be obtained.

Sir Joshua once observed to him, that he had talked above the capacity of some people with whom they had been in company together. "No matter, Sir, (said Johnson); they consider it as a compliment to be talked to, as if they were wiser than they are. Baxter made it a rule in every sermon to say something that was above the capacity of his audience."

I once reminded him that when Dr. Adam Smith was expatiating on the beauty of Glasgow, he cut him short by saying, "Pray, Sir, have you ever seen Brentford?" I took the liberty to add, "My dear Sir, surely that was *shocking*." — "Why, then, Sir, (he replied), you have never seen Brentford."

Though his usual phrase for conversation was *talk*, yet he made a distinction. "No, Sir; we had *talk* enough, but no *conversation;* there was nothing *discussed*."

Mr. Hoole told him, he had received part of his early instruction in Grub-street. "Sir, (said Johnson, smiling), you have been *regularly* educated." Mr. Hoole. "My uncle, Sir, was a taylor;" Johnson. "Sir, I knew him: we called him the *metaphysical taylor*. He was of a club in Old-street, with me and George Psalmanazar, and some others: but pray, Sir, was he a good taylor?" Mr. Hoole having answered that he believed he was too mathematical, and used to draw squares and triangles on his shop-board, so that he did not excel in the cut of a coat; — "I am sorry for it, (said Johnson), for I would have every man to be master of his own business."

He often said, "Let you and I, Sir, go together, and eat a beef-steak in Grub-street."

He said, "The age is running mad after innovation; and all the business of the world is to be done in a new way; men are to be hanged in a new way; they object, that the old method drew together a number of spectators. Sir, executions are intended to draw spectators.° If they do not draw spectators, they don't answer their purpose. The old method was most satisfactory to all parties; the publick was gratified by a procession; the criminal was supported by it. Why is all this to be swept away?"

When his Lordship declined the honour of being Archbishop of Canterbury, Johnson said, "I am glad he did not go to Lambeth; for, after all, I fear he is a Whig in his heart."

He disapproved of a parenthesis. He never used the phrases *the former and the latter*, having observed, that they often occasioned obscurity. Nothing is more common than to mistake surnames. To prevent this, he used not only to pronounce them slowly and distinctly, but to take the trouble of spelling them.

I owned to him, that "I was occasionally troubled with a fit of *narrowness*." "Why, Sir, (said he), so am I. *But I do not tell it.*" He has now and then borrowed a shilling of me; and when I asked him for it again, seemed to be rather out of humour. Once: as if he meant to reprimand my minute exactness as a creditor, he thus addressed me; — "Boswell, *lend* me sixpence — *not to be repaid.*"

He one day said to me, "Sir, when you get silver in change for a guinea, look carefully at it; you may find some curious piece of coin."

"Sir, (said he), two men of any other nation who are shewn into a room together, at a house where they are both visitors, will immediately find some conversation. But two Englishmen will probably go each to a different window, and remain in obstinate silence. Sir, we do not understand the common rights of humanity."

"Pray, Sir, (said Mr. Morgann), do you reckon Derrick or

Smart the better poet?' Johnson at once felt himself roused; and answered, "Sir, there is no settling the point of precedency between a louse and a flea."

He was pleased to say to me one morning in his study, "Boswell, I think I am easier with you than with almost any body."

"Sir, there is nothing by which a man exasperates most people more, than by displaying a superior ability of brilliancy in conversation. They seem pleased at the time; but their envy makes them curse him at their hearts."

Dr. Johnson could amuse himself with so slight and playful a species of composition as a *Charade*. I have recovered one which he made on Dr. Barnard.

CHARADE.

My *first* shuts out thieves from your house or your room,
My *second* expresses a Syrian perfume.
My *whole* is a man in whose converse is shar'd
The strength of a Bar and the sweetness of Nard."

"The Roman writers have not been *partial*, they have told their own story, without shame or regard to equitable treatment of their injured enemy. Why, Sir, they would never have borne Virgil's description of Æneas's treatment of Dido, if she had not been a Carthaginian."

Johnson's love of little children, he discovered upon all occasions, calling them "pretty dears," and giving them sweetmeats.

I never shall forget the indulgence with which he treated Hodge, his cat; for whom he himself used to go out and buy oysters, lest the servants, having that trouble, should take a dislike to the poor creature. I frequently suffered a good deal from the presence of this same Hodge. I recollect him scrambling up Dr. Johnson's breast, apparently with much satisfaction, while my friend smiling and half-whistling, rubbed down his back, and pulled him by the tail; and when I observed he was a fine cat, saying "why, yes, Sir, but I have had cats whom I liked better than this;" and then as

if perceiving Hodge to be out of countenance, adding, "but he is a very fine cat, a very fine cat indeed. Hodge shan't be shot: no, no, Hodge shall not be shot."

He thought Mr. Beauclerk made a shrewd and judicious remark to Mr. Langton, who, after having been for the first time in company with a well known wit, was warmly admiring and praising him, — "See him again," said Beauclerk.

Mr. Seward saw him presented to the Archbishop of York, and described his *Bow to an* ARCHBISHOP, as such a studied elaboration of homage, such an extension of limb, such a flexion of body, as have seldom or ever been equalled.

The tour to the Hebrides was mentioned. — JOHNSON. "I got an acquisition of more ideas by it than by any thing that I remember." BOSWELL. "You would not like to make the same journey again?" JOHNSON. "Why no, Sir; not the same: it is a tale told. Gravina observes, that every man desires to see that of which he has read; but no man desires to read an account of what he has seen; so much does description fall short of reality. Description only excites curiosity: seeing satisfies it."

"A man cannot tell *à priori* what will be best for government to do. This reign has been very unfortunate. We have had an unsuccessful war; but that does not prove that we have been ill governed. One side or other must prevail in war, as one or other must win at play. When we beat Louis, we were not better governed; nor were the French better governed, when Louis beat us."

Mr. Windham, though a Whig, he highly valued. One of the best things he ever said was to this gentleman; who, before he set out for Ireland as Secretary to Lord Northington, expressed to the Sage some modest and virtuous doubts, whether he could bring himself to practise those arts which it is supposed a person in that situation has occasion to employ. "Don't be afraid, Sir, (said Johnson, with a pleasant smile,) you will soon make a very pretty rascal."

He talked to-day a good deal of the wonderful extent and variety of London, and observed, that men of curious enquiry

might see in it such modes of life as very few could even imagine. He in particular recommended to us to *explore Wapping,* which we resolved to do.

Mr. Lowe was very much distressed that a large picture which he had painted was refused to be received into the Exhibition of the Royal Academy. He now gave Mr. Lowe the following.

To Sir Joshua Reynolds.

"Mr. Lowe considers himself as cut off from all credit and all hope, by the rejection of his picture from the Exhibition. Upon this work he has exhausted all his powers, and suspended all his expectations. Sam. Johnson."

Such intercession was too powerful to be resisted; and Mr. Lowe's performance was admitted at Somerset Place.[5]

On Good-Friday, I found him at breakfast, in his usual manner upon that day, drinking tea without milk, and eating a cross bun to prevent faintness; we went to St. Clement's church, as formerly. When we came home from church, he placed himself on one of the stone-seats at his garden-door, and I took the other, and thus in the open air, and in a placid frame of mind, he talked away very easily. Johnson. "Were I a country gentleman, I should not be very hospitable, I should not have crowds in my house." Boswell. "Sir Alexander Dick tells me, that he remembers having a thousand people in a year to dine at his house; that is, reckoning each person as one, each time that he dined there." Johnson. "That, Sir, is about three a day." Boswell. "How your statement lessens the idea." Johnson. "That, Sir, is the good of counting. It brings every thing to a certainty which before floated in the mind indefinitely." Boswell. "But *Omne ignotum pro magnifico est:* one is sorry to have this diminished." Johnson. "Sir, you should not allow yourself to be delighted with errour." Boswell. "Three a day seem but few." Johnson. "Nay, Sir, he who entertains three a day, does very liberally. And if there is a large fam-

ily, the poor entertain those three, for they eat what the poor would get: there must be superfluous meat; it must be given to the poor, or thrown out." BOSWELL. "I observe in London, that the poor go about and gather bones, which I understand are manufactured." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir; they boil them, and extract a grease from them for greasing wheels and other purposes. Of the best pieces they make a mock ivory, which is used for hafts to knives, and various other things; the coarser pieces they burn, and pound, and sell the ashes." BOSWELL. "For what purpose, Sir?" JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, for making a furnace for the chemists for melting iron. A paste made of burnt bones will stand a stronger heat than any thing else. Consider, Sir; if you are to melt iron, you cannot line your pot with brass, because it is softer than iron, and would melt sooner; nor with iron, for though malleable iron is harder than cast iron, yet it would not do; but a paste of burnt-bones will not melt." BOSWELL. "Do you know, Sir, I have discovered a manufacture to a great extent, of what you only piddle at, — scraping and drying the peel of oranges. At a place in Newgate-street, there is a prodigious quantity prepared, which they sell to the distillers." JOHNSON. "Sir, I believe they make a higher thing out of them than a spirit; they make what is called orange-butter, the oil of the orange inspissated, which they mix perhaps with common pomatum, and make it fragrant. The oil does not fly off in the drying."

BOSWELL. "I wish to have a good walled garden." JOHNSON. "I don't think it would be worth the expence to you. We compute, in England, a park-wall at a thousand pounds a mile; now a garden-wall must cost at least as much. But when will you get the value of two hundred pounds of walls, in fruit, in your climate? No, Sir, such contention with Nature is not worth while. I would plant an orchard, and have plenty of such fruit as ripen well in your country. My friend, Dr. Madden, of Ireland, said, that, 'in an orchard there should be enough to eat, enough to lay up, enough to be stolen, and enough to rot upon the ground.' Cherries are an

early fruit, you may have them; and you may have the early apples and pears." BOSWELL. "We cannot have nonpareils." JOHNSON. "Sir, you can no more have nonpareils, than you can have grapes." BOSWELL. "We have them, Sir; but they are very bad." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, never try to have a thing, merely to shew that you *cannot* have it." JOHNSON. "A hot-house is pretty certain; but you must first build it, then you must keep fires in it, and you must have a gardener to take care of it." BOSWELL. "I'd have it near my house." JOHNSON. "Yes, I'd have it near my house. — I would plant a great many currants; the fruit is good, and they make a pretty sweetmeat."

Mr. Walker, the celebrated master of elocution, came in, and then we went up stairs into the study. I asked him if he had taught many clergymen. JOHNSON. "I hope not. Were he the best reader in the world, I would not have it told that he was taught." Here was one of his peculiar prejudices.

WALKER. "Do you think, Sir, that there are any perfect synonimes in any language?" JOHNSON. "Originally, there were not; but by using words negligently, or in poetry, one word comes to be confounded with another."

Garrick's funeral was talked of as extravagantly expensive.° Johnson, from his dislike to exaggeration, would not allow that it was distinguished by any extraordinary pomp. "Were there not six horses to each coach?" said Mrs. Burney. JOHNSON. "Madam, there were no more six horses than six phœnixes."

JOHNSON. "It is said there are no weak or deformed people among the Indians; the hardship of their lives as hunters and fishers, does not allow weak or diseased children to grow up. Now had I been an Indian, I must have died early; my eyes would not have served me to get food. I indeed now could fish, give me English tackle; but had I been an Indian, I must have starved, or they would have knocked me on the head, when they saw I could do nothing." BOSWELL. "Perhaps they would have taken care of you; we are told they are

fond of oratory, — you would have talked to them." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, I should not have lived long enough to be fit to talk; I should have been dead before I was ten years old. Depend upon it, Sir, a savage, when he is hungry, will not carry about with him a looby of nine years old, who cannot help himself. They have no affection, Sir." "Sir, natural affection is nothing: but affection from principle and established duty, is sometimes wonderfully strong." LOWE. "A hen, Sir, will feed her chickens in preference to herself." JOHNSON. "But we don't know that the hen is hungry; let the hen be fairly hungry, and I'll warrant she'll peck the corn herself. A cock, I believe, will feed hens instead of himself; but we don't know that the cock is hungry." BOSWELL. "And that, Sir, is not from affection but gallantry. But some of the Indians have affection." JOHNSON. "Sir, that they help some of their children is plain; for some of them live, which they could not do without being helped."

A near relation of mine had killed his antagonist in a duel, and was himself dangerously wounded. JOHNSON. "I do not see, Sir, that fighting is absolutely forbidden in Scripture; I see revenge forbidden, but not self-defence." BOSWELL. "The Quakers say it is; 'Unto him that smiteth thee on one cheek, offer him also the other.'" JOHNSON. "But stay, Sir; the text is meant only to have the effect of moderating passion; it is plain that we are not to take it in a literal sense. We see this from the context, where there are other recommendations, which I warrant you the Quaker will not take literally; as, for instance, 'From him that would borrow of thee, turn thou not away.' Let a man whose credit is bad, come to a Quaker, and say, 'Well, Sir, lend me a hundred pounds;' he'll find him as unwilling as any other man."

We talked of the accusation against a gentleman for supposed delinquencies in India. JOHNSON. "What foundation there is for accusation I know not, but they will not get at him. Where bad actions are committed at so great a distance, a delinquent can obscure the evidence till the scent becomes cold; therefore all distant power is bad. The best

plan for the government of India is a despotick governour; for if he be a good man, it is evidently the best government; and supposing him to be a bad man, it is better to have one plunderer than many."

I mentioned the very liberal payment for reviewing; and that Dr. Shebbeare had received six guineas a sheet. JOHNSON. "Sir, he might get six guineas for a particular sheet, but not *communibus sheetibus*." BOSWELL. "Are extracts deducted?" JOHNSON. "No, Sir, it is a sheet, no matter of what." BOSWELL. "I think that is not reasonable." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, it is. A man will more easily write a sheet all his own, than read an octavo volume to get extracts." A great deal, indeed, will depend upon the care and judgement with which extracts are made. I can suppose the operation to be tedious and difficult; but in many instances we must observe crude morsels cut out of books as if at random; and when a large extract is made from one place, it surely may be done with very little trouble.

Mr. Sheridan, indignant at the neglect of his oratorical plans, had threatened to go to America. JOHNSON. "I hope he will go to America." BOSWELL. "The Americans don't want oratory." JOHNSON. "But we can want Sheridan."

SEWARD. "I wonder that there should be people without religion." JOHNSON. "Sir, you need not wonder at this, when you consider how large a proportion of almost every man's life is passed without thinking of it. I myself was for some years totally regardless of religion. It had dropped out of my mind. It was at an early part of my life. Sickness brought it back, and I hope I have never lost it since."

SEWARD. "Would you restrain private conversation, Sir?" JOHNSON. "Sir, it is difficult to say where private conversation begins, and where it ends. If we three should discuss the existence of a Supreme Being we should not be restrained. But if we should discuss it in the presence of ten boarding-school girls, and as many boys, the magistrate would do well to put us in the stocks, to finish the debate there."

"I do not think the story of the Æneid interesting. I like the story of the Odyssey much better, not on account of the wonderful things which it contains; for there are wonderful things enough in the Æneid; — the ships of the Trojans turned to sea-nymphs, — the tree at Polydorus's tomb dropping blood. The Odyssey is interesting, as a great part of it is domestick."

Young Mr. Burke's conversation was such that Dr. Johnson said to me afterwards, "He did very well indeed; I have a mind to tell his father."

Boswell. "Perhaps, Sir, I should be the less happy for being in Parliament. I never would sell my vote, and I should be vexed if things went wrong." Johnson. "That's cant, Sir. Publick affairs vex no man." Boswell. "Have not you been vexed by that absurd vote of the House of Commons, 'That the influence of the Crown is increasing, and ought to be diminished?'" Johnson. "Sir, I have never slept an hour less, nor eat an ounce less meat. I would have knocked the factious dogs on the head, to be sure; but I was not *vexed*." Boswell. "I declare, Sir, upon my honour, I did imagine I was vexed, and took a pride in it; but it *was*, perhaps, cant; for I own I neither eat less, nor slept less." Johnson. "My dear friend, clear your *mind* of cant. You may *talk* as other people do: you may say to a man, 'Sir, I am your most humble servant.' You are *not* his most humble servant. You tell a man, 'I am sorry you had such bad weather the last day of your journey, and were so much wet.' You don't care six-pence whether he is wet or dry. You may *talk* in this manner; it is a mode of talking in Society: but don't *think* foolishly."

I talked of living in the country. Johnson. "Don't set up for what is called hospitality: it is a waste of time, and a waste of money; you are eaten up, and not the more respected for your liberality. If your house be like an inn, nobody cares for you. A man who stays a week with another, makes him a slave for a week." Boswell. "But there are people, Sir, who make their houses a home to their guests, and are

themselves quite easy." JOHNSON. "Then, Sir, home must be the same to the guests, and they need not come."

I found him at tea, and the celebrated Miss Burney, the authour of "Evelina" and "Cecilia," with him. I mentioned "Cecilia." ° JOHNSON. (with an air of animated satisfaction) "Sir, if you talk of 'Cecilia,' talk on."

I asked, whether a man naturally virtuous, or one who has overcome wicked inclinations, is the best. JOHNSON. "Sir, to *you*, the man who has overcome wicked inclinations, is not the best. He has more merit to *himself:* I would rather trust my money to a man who has no hands, and so a physical impossibility to steal, than to a man of the most honest principles. There is a witty satirical story of Foote. He had a small bust of Garrick placed upon his bureau. 'You may be surprised (said he), that I allow him to be so near my gold; — but you will observe, he has no hands.'"

I mentioned one who was a very learned man. JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, he has a great deal of learning; but it never lies straight. There is never one idea by the side of another: 'tis all entangled: and then he drives it so awkwardly upon conversation!"

JOHNSON. "Sir, if a man has led a good life for seven years, and then is hurried by passion to do what is wrong, and is suddenly carried off, depend upon it he will have the reward of his seven years' good life: GOD will not take a catch of him."

He embraced me, and gave me his blessing, as usual when I was leaving him for any length of time. I walked from his door to-day, with a fearful apprehension of what might happen before I returned.

TO MR ALLEN.

"IT has pleased GOD, this morning, to deprive me of the powers of speech; and as I do not know but that it may be his further good pleasure to deprive me soon of my senses, I request you will on the receipt of this note, come to me, and act for me, as the exigencies of my case may require.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

I here insert a few particulars concerning Johnson from one of his friends.

"He had once conceived the design of writing the Life of Oliver Cromwell, saying that he thought it might be highly curious to trace his extraordinary rise to the supreme power, from so obscure a beginning."

"He had projected a work to shew how small a quantity of REAL FICTION there is in the world; and that the same images, with very little variation, have served all the authours who have ever written."

"His thoughts in the latter part of his life were frequently employed on his deceased friends. He often muttered these, or such like sentences: 'Poor man! and then he died.'"

Of a certain literary friend, 'He is a very pompous puzzling fellow, (said he); he lent me a letter once that somebody had written to him, he wanted to have the letter back, and expressed a mighty value for it; he would not lose it for a thousand pounds. I layed my hand upon it soon afterwards. O, then he did not know that it signified any thing. So you see, when the letter was lost it was worth a thousand pounds, and when it was found it was not worth a farthing.'"

"The style and character of his conversation was certainly conducted in conformity with a precept of Lord Bacon. 'In all kinds of speech, either pleasant, grave, severe, or ordinary, it is convenient to speak leisurely, and rather drawlingly than hastily: because hasty speech confounds the memory, and oftentimes, besides the unseemliness, drives a man either to stammering, a non-plus, or harping on that which should follow; whereas a slow speech confirmeth the memory, addeth a conceit of wisdom to the hearers, besides a seemliness of speech and countenance.'"

"'I look upon myself to be a man very much misunderstood. I am not an uncandid, nor am I a severe man. I sometimes say more than I mean, in jest; and people are apt to believe me serious: however, I am more candid than I was when I

was younger. As I know more of mankind, I expect less of them, and am ready now to call a man *a good man*, upon easier terms than I was formerly.'"

To Bennet Langton.

"The gout° has within these four days come upon me with a violence which I never experienced before. It made me helpless as an infant. — Mrs. Williams' death following that of Levet, has now made my house a solitude. She left her little substance to a charity-school. She is, I hope, where there is neither darkness, nor want, nor sorrow.

"Sam. Johnson."

He received a visit from the celebrated Mrs. Siddons. He gives this account of it in one of his letters to Mrs. Thrale: — "Mrs. Siddons, in her visit to me, behaved with great modesty and propriety, and left nothing behind her to be censured or despised. Neither praise nor money, the two powerful corrupters of mankind, seemed to have depraved her. I shall be glad to see her again. Her brother Kemble calls on me, and pleases me very well. Mrs. Siddons and I talked of plays; and she told me her intention of exhibiting this winter the characters of Constance, Catharine, and Isabella, in Shakspeare."

When Mrs. Siddons came into the room, there happened to be no chair ready for her, which he observing, said with a smile, "Madam, you who so often occasion a want of seats to other people, will the more easily excuse the want of one yourself."

Having placed himself by her, he with great good humour entered upon a consideration of the English drama; and, particularly asked her which of Shakspeare's characters she was most pleased with. Upon her answering that she thought the character of Queen Catharine the most natural: — "I think so too, Madam, (said he); and whenever you perform it, I will once more hobble out to the theatre myself." Mrs.

Siddons promised she would do herself the honour of acting his favourite part for him; but many circumstances happened to prevent the representation of King Henry the Eighth during the Doctor's life.

He thus gave his opinion upon the merits of some of the principal performers whom he remembered. "Mrs. Porter, in the vehemence of rage, and Mrs. Clive, in the sprightliness of humour, I have never seen equalled. What Clive did best, she did better than Garrick; but could not do half so many things well; she was a better romp than any I ever saw in nature. — Pritchard, in common life, was a vulgar ideot; she would talk of her *gownd;* but, when she appeared upon the stage, seemed to be inspired by gentility and understanding. — I once talked with Colley Cibber, and thought him ignorant of the principles of his art. — Garrick, Madam, was no declaimer; there was not one of his own scene-shifters who could not have spoken *To be, or not to be,* better than he did; yet he was the only actor I ever saw, whom I could call a master both in tragedy and comedy; though I liked him best in comedy. A true conception of character, and natural expression of it, were his distinguished excellencies. And after all, Madam, I thought him less to be envied on the stage than at the head of a table."

To Mr. Kemble, he said, "Are you, Sir, one of those enthusiasts who believe yourself transformed into the very character you represent?" Upon Mr. Kemble's answering — that he had never felt so strong a persuasion himself; "To be sure not, Sir, (said Johnson); the thing is impossible. And if Garrick really believed himself to be that monster, Richard the Third, he deserved to be hanged every time he performed it."

In a letter to one of the Miss Thrales, he writes, "A friend, whose name I will tell when your mamma has tried to guess it, sent to my physician to enquire whether this long train of illness had brought me into difficulties for want of money, with an invitation to send to him for what occasion required. I shall write this night to thank him, having no need to borrow."

And afterwards, in a letter to Mrs. Thrale, "Since you cannot guess, I will tell you, that the generous man was Gerard Hamilton."

To Sir Joshua Reynolds.

"It is inconvenient to me to come out; I should else have waited on you with an account of a little Evening-Club which we are establishing in Essex-street, in the Strand, and of which you are desired to be one. It will be held at the Essex Head, now kept by an old servant of Thrale's. The company is numerous, and, as you will see by the list, miscellaneous. The terms are lax, and the expences light. Mr. Barry was adopted by Dr. Brocklesby, who joined with me in forming the plan. We meet thrice a week, and he who misses forfeits two-pence.

"If you are willing to become a member, draw a line under your name. Return the list. We meet for the first time on Monday at eight. Sam. Johnson."

To Boswell.

"One thing I must enjoin you, which is seldom observed in the conduct of elections; — I must entreat you to be scrupulous in the use of strong liquors. One night's drunkenness may defeat the labours of forty days well employed. Be firm, but not clamorous; be active, but not malicious; and you may form such an interest, as may not only exalt yourself, but dignify your family. Sam. Johnson."

To the Reverend Dr. Taylor, Ashbourne, Derbyshire.

"Dear Sir,

"What can be the reason that I hear nothing from you? I hope nothing disables you from writing. What I have seen, and what I have felt, gives me reason to fear every thing. Do not omit giving me the comfort of knowing, that after all my losses I have yet a friend left.

"I want every comfort. My life is very solitary and very

cheerless. Though it has pleased God wonderfully to deliver me from the dropsy, I am yet very weak, and have not passed the door since the 13th of December. I hope for some help from warm weather, which will surely come in time.

"I could not have the consent of the physicians to go to church yesterday; I therefore received the holy sacrament at home, in the room where I communicated with dear Mrs. Williams, a little before her death. O! my friend, the approach of death is very dreadful. I am afraid to think on that which I know I cannot avoid. It is vain to look round and round for that help which cannot be had. Yet we hope and hope, and fancy that he who has lived to-day may live to-morrow. But let us learn to derive our hope only from God.

"In the mean time, let us be kind to one another. I have no friend now living but you and Mr. Hector, that was the friend of my youth. Do not neglect, dear Sir,

"Yours affectionately,

"Sam. Johnson."

"London, Easter-Monday, April 12, 1784."

To his god-child, one of the daughters of Mr. Langton, then in her seventh year, he took the trouble to write in a large round hand, nearly resembling printed characters, that she might have the satisfaction of reading it herself.

To Miss Jane Langton, in Rochester, Kent.

"My dearest Miss Jenny,

"I am sorry that your pretty letter has been so long without being answered; but, when I am not pretty well, I do not always write plain enough for young ladies. I am glad, my dear, to see that you write so well, and hope that you mind your pen, your book, and your needle, for they are all necessary. Your books will give you knowledge, and make you respected; and your needle will find you useful employment when you do not care to read. When you are a little older, I hope you will be very diligent in learning arithmetick; and, above all,

that through your whole life you will carefully say your prayers, and read your Bible.

"I am, my dear,

"Your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"May 10, 1784."

He communicated to me, with solemn earnestness, a very remarkable circumstance which had happened in the course of his illness. He had shut himself up, and employed a day in particular exercises of religion, — fasting, humiliation, and prayer. On a sudden he obtained extraordinary relief, for which he looked up to Heaven with grateful devotion. He made no direct inference from this fact; but from his manner of telling it, I could perceive that it appeared to him as something more than an incident in the common course of events.

When a person was mentioned, who said, "I have lived fifty-one years in this world, without having had ten minutes of uneasiness;" he exclaimed, "The man who says so, lies: he attempts to impose on human credulity." Talking of George Psalmanazar, whom he reverenced for his piety, he said, "I should as soon think of contradicting a BISHOP." One of the company provoked him greatly by doing what he could least of all bear, quoting something of his own writing, against what he then maintained. "What, Sir, do you say to

'The busy day, the peaceful night,
Unfelt, uncounted, glided by?'"

Johnson burst out in an unjustifiable retort, insinuating that the gentleman's remark was a sally of chriety; "Sir, there is one passion I would advise you to command: when you have drunk out that glass, don't drink another." Here was exemplified what Goldsmith said of him: "There is no arguing with Johnson: for if his pistol misses fire, he knocks you down with the butt end of it."

When I told him that a young and handsome Countess had said to me, "I should think that to be praised by Dr. Johnson would make one a fool all one's life;" and that I answered,

"Madam, I shall make him a fool to-day, by repeating this to him;" he said, "I am too old to be made a fool; but if you say I am made a fool I shall not deny it. I am much pleased with a compliment, especially from a pretty woman."

He was in fine spirits at our Essex-Head Club. "I dined yesterday at Mrs. Garrick's with Mrs. Carter, Miss Hannah More, and Miss Fanny Burney. Three such women are not to be found: I know not where I could find a fourth, except Mrs. Lennox, who is superiour to them all." BOSWELL. "What! had you them all to yourself, Sir?" JOHNSON. "I had them all, as much as they were had; but it might have been better had there been more company there." BOSWELL. "Might not Mrs. Montagu have been a fourth?" JOHNSON. "Sir, Mrs. Montagu does not make a trade of her wit; but Mrs. Montagu is a very extraordinary woman: she has a constant stream of conversation, and it is always impregnated; it has always meaning." BOSWELL. "Mr. Burke has a constant stream of conversation." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir; if a man were to go by chance at the same time with Burke under a shed, to shun a shower, he would say — 'This is an extraordinary man.' If Burke should go into a stable to see his horse drest, the ostler would say — 'We have had an extraordinary man here.'" When Burke does not descend to be merry, his conversation is very superiour indeed. I have opposed Dr. Johnson's very singular and erroneous notion as to Mr. Burke's pleasantry. Mr. Windham now said low to me, that Mr. Burke was often very happy in his merriment. He called to us with a sudden air of exultation. "O! gentlemen, I must tell you a very great thing. The Empress of Russia has ordered the 'Rambler' to be translated into the Russian language: so I shall be read on the banks of the Wolga. Horace boasts that his fame would extend as far as the banks of the Rhone; now the Wolga is farther from me than the Rhone was from Horace."

He talked of Mrs. Thrale with much concern, saying, "Sir, she has done every thing wrong since Thrale's bridle was off her neck."

In one of his little manuscript diaries I find, "Afternoon spent cheerfully and elegantly, I hope without offence to God or man; though in no holy duty, yet in the general exercise and cultivation of benevolence."

He charged Mr. Langton with what he thought want of judgement. "When I was ill, I desired he would tell me sincerely in what he thought my life was faulty. Sir, he brought me a sheet of paper, on which he had written down several texts of Scripture, recommending christian charity. And when I questioned him what occasion I had given for such an animadversion, all that he could say amounted to this, — that I sometimes contradicted people in conversation. Now what harm does it do to any man to be contradicted?" Boswell. "I suppose he meant the *manner* of doing it; roughly, – and harshly." Johnson. "And who is the worse for that?" Boswell. "It hurts people of weaker nerves." Johnson. "I know no such weak-nerved people." Mr. Burke said, "It is well, if when a man comes to die, he has nothing heavier upon his conscience than having been a little rough in conversation." ° Johnson, when the paper was presented to him, though at first pleased with the attention of his friend, whom he thanked in an earnest manner, soon exclaimed in a loud and angry tone, "What is your drift, Sir?" Sir Joshua Reynolds observed, that it was a scene for a comedy, to see a penitent get into a violent passion and belabour his confessor.

He had dined that day at Mr. Hoole's, and Miss Helen Maria Williams being expected, Mr. Hoole put into his hands her "Ode on the Peace:" Johnson read it over, took her by the hand, and repeated the finest stanza of her poem; this was the most delicate and pleasing compliment he could pay. Miss Williams told me, that the only other time she was in Dr. Johnson's company, he asked her to sit down by him, and upon her enquiring how he was, he answered, "I am very ill indeed, Madam. I am very ill even when you are near me; what should I be were you at a distance?"

He had now a great desire to go to Oxford, as his first jaunt

after his illness; and I had promised to accompany him, though with some inconvenience to myself, as I wished to attend the musical meeting in honour of Handel, in Westminster-Abbey, on the following Saturday.

The Oxford post-coach took us up in the morning at Boltcourt. The other two passengers were Mrs. Beresford and her daughter, two very agreeable ladies from America. Frank had been sent by his master the day before to take places for us; and I found from the way-bill that Dr. Johnson had made our names be put down. Mrs. Beresford, who had read it, whispered me, "Is this the great Dr. Johnson?" I told her it was. As she soon happened to mention in a voice so low that Johnson did not hear it, that her husband had been a member of the American Congress, I cautioned her to beware of introducing that subject, as she must know how very violent Johnson was against the people of that country. He talked a great deal. Miss Beresford was so much charmed, that she said to me aside, "How he does talk! Every sentence is an essay."

I was surprised at his talking without reserve in the publick post-coach of the state of his affairs; "I have (said he), about the world I think above a thousand pounds, which I intend shall afford Frank an annuity of seventy pounds a-year." Indeed his openness with people at a first interview was remarkable. He said once to Mr. Langton, "I think I am like Squire Richard in 'The Journey to London,' *'I'm never strange in a strange place.'*" He was truly *social*.

At the inn where we stopped he was exceedingly dissatisfied with some roast mutton which he had for dinner. The ladies wondered to see the great philosopher, whose wisdom and wit they had been admiring all the way, get into ill humour from such a cause. He scolded the waiter, saying, "It is as bad as bad can be: it is ill-fed, ill-killed, ill-kept, and ill-drest."

He bore the journey very well, and seemed to feel himself elevated as he approached Oxford, that magnificent and venerable seat of Learning, Orthodoxy, and Toryism. Frank

came in the heavy coach, in readiness to attend him; and we were received with the most polite hospitality at the house of his old friend Dr. Adams, Master of Pembroke College.

I fulfilled my intention by going to London, and returned to Oxford, when I was happy to find myself again in the same agreeable circle at Pembroke College.

"I wonder that women are not all Papists." BOSWELL. "They are not more afraid of death than men are." JOHNSON. "Because they are less wicked." DR. ADAMS. "They are more pious." JOHNSON. "No, hang 'em, they are not more pious. A wicked fellow is the most pious when he takes to it. He'll beat you all at piety."

"Ladies set no value on the moral character of men who pay their addresses to them; the greatest profligate will be as well received as the man of the greatest virtue, and this by a woman who says her prayers three times a day." Our ladies endeavoured to defend their sex, but he roared them down! "No, no, a lady will take Jonathan Wild as readily as St. Austin, if he has threepence more; and, what is worse, her parents will give her to him. Women are the slaves of order and fashion; their virtue is of more consequence to us than our own, so far as concerns this world."

Miss Adams mentioned a gentleman of licentious character, and said, "Suppose I had a mind to marry that gentleman, would my parents consent?" JOHNSON. "Yes, they'd consent, and you'd go. You'd go, though they did not consent." MISS ADAMS. "Perhaps their opposing might make me go." JOHNSON. "O, very well; you'd take one whom you think a bad man, to have the pleasure of vexing your parents. You put me in mind of Dr. Barrowby, the physician, who was very fond of swine's flesh. One day, when he was eating it, he said, 'I wish I was a Jew.' — 'Why so? (said somebody), the Jews are not allowed to eat your favourite meat.' — 'Because I should then have the gust of eating it, with the pleasure of sinning.'" — Johnson then proceeded in his declamation.

Miss Adams made an observation which pleased him much;

he said with a good-humoured smile, "That there should be so much excellence united with so much *depravity*, is strange."

Indeed, this lady's good qualities, and her constant attention to Dr. Johnson, were not lost upon him. She happened to tell him that a little coffee-pot, in which she had made him coffee, was the only thing she could call her own. He turned to her with a complacent gallantry, "Don't say so, my dear; I hope you don't reckon my heart as nothing."

I asked him if it was true as reported, that he had said lately, "I am for the King against Fox; but I am for Fox against Pitt." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, the King is my master; but I do not know Pitt; and Fox is my friend. Fox has divided the Kingdom with Cæsar; so that it was a doubt whether the nation should be ruled by the sceptre of George the Third, or the tongue of Fox."

"Many additions to our medical knowledge might be got in foreign countries. Inoculation, for instance, has saved more lives than war destroys: and the cures performed by the Peruvian-bark are innumerable."

JOHNSON. "I know of no good prayers but those in the 'Book of Common Prayer.'" DR. ADAMS, (in a very earnest manner), "I wish, Sir, you would compose some family prayers." JOHNSON. "I will not compose prayers for you, Sir, because you can do it for yourself. But I have thought of getting together all the books of prayers which I could, selecting those which should appear to me the best, putting out some, inserting others, adding some prayers of my own, and prefixing a discourse on prayer." We all now gathered about him, and two or three of us at a time joined in pressing him to execute this plan. He seemed to be a little displeased at the manner of our importunity, and in great agitation called out, "Do not talk thus of what is so awful. I know not what time GOD will allow me in this world. There are many things which I wish to do." Dr. Adams said, "I never was more serious about any thing in my life." JOHNSON. "Let me alone, let me alone; I am overpowered." And

then he put his hands before his face, and reclined for some time upon the table.

I had the resolution to ask Johnson whether he thought that the rouginess of his manner had been an advantage or not, and if he would not have done more good if he had been more gentle. JOHNSON. "No, Sir. Obscenity and Impiety have always been repressed in my company." BOSWELL. "True, Sir; and that is more than can be said of every Bishop."

JOHNSON. "No, Sir. Abuse is not so dangerous when there is no vehicle of wit or delicacy, no subtle conveyance. The difference between coarse and refined abuse is as the difference between being bruised by a club, and wounded by a poisoned arrow."

Dr. Adams suggested that GOD was infinitely good. JOHNSON. "That he is infinitely good, as far as the perfection of his nature will allow, I certainly believe; but it is necessary for good upon the whole, that individuals should be punished. As to an *individual*, therefore, he is not infinitely good; and as I cannot be *sure* that I have fulfilled the conditions on which salvation is granted, I am afraid I may be one of those who shall be damned" (looking dismally). DR. ADAMS. "What do you mean by damned!" JOHNSON. (passionately and loudly) "Sent to Hell, Sir, and punished everlastingly." DR. ADAMS. "I don't believe that doctrine." JOHNSON. "Well, Sir; but, if you admit any degree of punishment, there is an end of your argument for infinite goodness; infinite goodness would inflict no punishment whatever. There is no infinite goodness physically considered; morally there is."

It was observed to Dr. Johnson, that it seemed strange that he, who has so often delighted his company by his lively and brilliant conversation, should say he was miserable. JOHNSON. "Alas! it is all outside; I may be cracking my joke, and cursing the sun. *Sun, how I hate thy beams!*" We may apply to him a sentence in Mr. Greville's "Maxims, Characters, and Reflections;" a book which is entitled to much more praise than it has received: "ARISTARCHUS is charming: how full of knowledge, of sense, of sentiment.

You get him with difficulty to your supper; and after having delighted every body and himself for a few hours, he is obliged to return home: — he is finishing his treatise, to prove that unhappiness is the portion of man."

Miss Hannah More had expressed a wonder that the poet who had written "Paradise Lost," should write such poor Sonnets:° — "Milton, Madam, was a genius that could cut a Colossus from a rock, but could not carve heads upon cherry-stones."

Boswell. "Supposing the person who wrote *Junius* were asked whether he was the authour, might he deny it?" Johnson. "I don't know what to say to this. If you were *sure* that he wrote *Junius*, would you, if he denied it, think as well of him afterwards? Yet it may be urged, that what a man has no right to ask, you may refuse to communicate; and there is no other effectual mode of preserving a secret and an important secret, the discovery of which may be very hurtful to you, but a flat denial; for if you are silent, or hesitate, or evade, it will be held equivalent to a confession. But stay, Sir, here is another case. Supposing the authour had told me confidentially that he had written *Junius*, and I were asked if he had, I should hold myself at liberty to deny it, as being under a previous promise, express or implied, to conceal it. Now what I ought to do for the authour, may I not do for myself? But I deny the lawfulness of telling a lie to a sick man, for fear of alarming him. You have no business with consequences; you are to tell the truth. Besides, you are not sure, what effect your telling him he is in danger may have. It may bring his distemper to a crisis, and that may cure him. Of all lying, I have the greatest abhorrence of this, because I believe it has been frequently practised on myself."

"I have been to see my old friend, Sack. Parker; I find he has married his maid; he has done right. She had lived with him many years in great confidence, and they had mingled minds; I do not think he could have found any wife that would have made him so happy."

Croft advised a young gentleman to read to the end of

books. JOHNSON. "This is surely a strange advice; you may as well resolve that whatever men you happen to get acquainted with, you are to keep to them for life. These Voyages, pointing to the three large volumes of 'Voyages to the South Sea,' *who* will read them through? A man had better work his way before the mast, than read them through; they will be eaten by rats and mice, before they are read through. Don't cant in defence of Savages." BOSWELL. "They have the art of navigation." JOHNSON. "A dog or a cat can swim." BOSWELL. "They carve very ingeniously." JOHNSON. "A cat can scratch, and a child with a nail can scratch." I perceived this was none of the *mollia tempora fandi;* ° so desisted.

MISS ADAMS. "Do you think, Sir, you could make your Ramblers better?" JOHNSON. "Certainly I could. I shall make the best of them you shall pick out, better." — BOSWELL. "But you may add to them. I will not allow of that." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, there are three ways of making them better: — putting out, — adding, — or correcting."

A gentleman who had a son whom he imagined to have an extreme degree of timidity, resolved to send him to a publick school, that he might acquire confidence: "Sir, (said Johnson), this is a preposterous expedient for removing his infirmity; such a disposition should be cultivated in the shade. Placing him at a publick school is forcing an owl upon day."

Speaking of a gentleman whose house was much frequented by low company; "Rags, Sir, (said he), will always make their appearance where they have a right to do it. Sir, the servants, instead of doing what they are bid, stand round the table in idle clusters, gaping upon the guests; and seem as unfit to attend a company, as to steer a man of war."

A dull country magistrate gave Johnson a long, tedious account of his having sentenced four convicts to transportation. Johnson, in an agony of impatience to get rid of such a companion, exclaimed, "I heartily wish, Sir, that I were a fifth."

A tragedy was read, in which there occurred this line:

"Who rules o'er freemen should himself be free."

The company having admired it much, "I cannot agree with you (said Johnson): It might as well be said,

Who drives fat oxen should himself be fat."

A pertinacious gentleman, his opponent, happened to say, "I don't understand you, Sir;" upon which Johnson observed, "Sir, I have found you an argument; but I am not obliged to find you an understanding."

Mr. Walpole thought Johnson a more amiable character after reading his letters to Mrs. Thrale: but never was one of the true admirers of that great man. We may suppose a prejudice conceived, if he ever heard Johnson's account to Sir George Staunton, that when he made the speeches in parliament for the Gentleman's Magazine, "he always took care to put Sir Robert Walpole in the wrong."

His frequent use of the expression, *No, Sir,* was not always to intimate contradiction; for he would say so when he was about to enforce an affirmative proposition which had not been denied, last mentioned. I used to consider it as a kind of flag of defiance: as if he had said, "Any argument you may offer against this is not just. No, Sir, it is not." It was like Falstaff's "I deny your Major."

Sir Joshua Reynolds having said that he took the altitude of a man's taste by his stories and his wit, and of his understanding by the remarks which he repeated; being always sure that he must be a weak man, who quotes common things with an emphasis as if they were oracles; — Johnson agreed with him; and Sir Joshua having also observed that the real character of a man was found out by his amusements, — Johnson added, "Yes, Sir; no man is a hypocrite in his pleasures."

I have mentioned Johnson's general aversion to a pun. He once, however, endured one of mine. When we were talking of a numerous company in which he had distinguished himself highly, I said, "Sir, you were a Cod surrounded by smelts. Is not this enough for you? at a time too when you were not *fishing* for a compliment?" He laughed at this with a com-

placent approbation. Old Mr. Sheridan observed, "He liked your compliment so well, he was willing to take it with *pun sauce*."

In one of Mr. Grattan's speeches in favour of the freedom of Ireland, this expression occurred: "We will persevere, till there is not one link of the English chain left to clank upon the rags of the meanest beggar in Ireland:"—"Nay, Sir. (said Johnson), don't you perceive that *one* link cannot clank?"

When Mr. Townshend threw out some reflection in parliament upon the grant of a pension to a man of such political principles as Johnson, Mr. Burke, though then of the same party with Mr. Townshend, stood warmly forth in defence of his friend, to whom, he justly observed, the pension was granted solely on account of his eminent literary merit. Mr. Townshend's attack upon Johnson was the occasion of his "hitching in a rhyme;" for, in the original copy of Goldsmith's character of Mr. Burke, in his "Retaliation," another person's name stood in the couplet where Mr. Townshend is now introduced:

> "Though fraught with all learning, kept straining his throat,
> To persuade *Tommy Townshend* to lend him a vote."

Johnson was once drawn to serve in the militia, the Trained Bands of the City of London. It may be believed he did not serve in person; but the idea, with all its circumstances, is certainly laughable. He provided himself with a musket, and with a sword and belt, which I have seen hanging in his closet.

Somebody talked of being imposed on in the purchase of tea and sugar. JOHNSON. "Go to a *stately shop*, as I always do. In such a shop it is not worth their while to take a petty advantage."

An authour of most anxious and restless vanity being mentioned, "Sir, (said he), there is not a young sapling upon Parnassus more severely blown about by every wind of criticism than that poor fellow."

The difference, he observed, between a well-bred and an ill-bred man is this: "One immediately attracts your liking,

the other your aversion. You love the one till you find reason to hate him; you hate the other till you find reason to love him."

The wife of one of his acquaintance had fraudulently made a purse for herself out of her husband's fortune. Feeling a proper compunction in her last moments, she confessed how much she had secreted; but before she could tell where it was placed, she expired. Her husband said, he was more hurt by her want of confidence in him, than by the loss of his money. "I told him, (said Johnson), that he should console himself: for *perhaps* the money might be *found*, and he was *sure* that his wife was *gone*."

A foppish physician once reminded Johnson of his having been in company with him on a former occasion, "I do not remember it, Sir." The physician still insisted; adding that he that day wore so fine a coat that it must have attracted his notice. "Sir, (said Johnson), had you been dipt in Pactolus, I should not have noticed you."

He seemed to take a pleasure in speaking in his own style; for when he had carelessly missed it, he would repeat the thought translated into it. Talking of the Comedy of "The Rehearsal," he said, "It has not wit enough to keep it sweet." This was easy; — he therefore caught himself, and pronounced a more round sentence; "It has not vitality enough to preserve it from putrefaction."

"Sir, your assent to a man whom you have never known to falsify, is a debt: but after you have known a man to falsify, your assent to him then is a favour."

A little Miss on seeing a picture of Justice with the scales, had exclaimed to me, "See, there's a woman selling sweetmeats;" he said, "Painting, Sir, can illustrate, but cannot inform."

No man was more ready to make an apology when he had censured unjustly, than Johnson. When a proof-sheet of one of his works was brought to him, he found fault with the mode in which a part of it was arranged, refused to read it, and in a passion desired that the compositor might be sent to

him. The compositor was Mr. Manning, who had composed about one half of his "Dictionary," and who composed a part of the first edition of this work concerning him. By producing the manuscript, he at once satisfied Dr. Johnson that he was not to blame. Upon which Johnson candidly and earnestly said to him, "Mr. Compositor, I ask your pardon; Mr. Compositor, I ask your pardon, again and again."

Coming home late one night, he found a poor woman lying in the street, so much exhausted that she could not walk; he took her upon his back, and carried her to his house, where he discovered that she was one of those wretched females who had fallen into the lowest state of vice, poverty, and disease. He had her taken care of with all tenderness, till she was restored to health, and endeavoured to put her into a virtuous way of living.

He once in his life was known to have uttered a *bull*: Sir Joshua Reynolds, when they were riding together in Devonshire, complained that he had a very bad horse, for that even when going down hill he moved slowly step by step. "Ay (said Johnson), and when he *goes* up hill, he *stands still*."

He had a great aversion to gesticulating in company. He called once to a gentleman who offended him in that point, "Don't *attitudenise*." And when another gentleman thought he was giving additional force to what he uttered, by expressive movements of his hands, Johnson fairly seized them, and held them down.

A gentleman said that a *congé d'elire*° has not, perhaps, the force of a command, but may be considered only as a strong recommendation; —"Sir, (replied Johnson), it is such a recommendation, as if I should throw you out of a two pair of stairs window, and recommend to you to fall soft."

Previous to the trial of Baretti, a consultation of his friends was held. Among others present were Mr Burke and Dr. Johnson, who differed concerning some part of

the defence. Mr. Steevens observed, that the question had been agitated with rather too much warmth. "It may be so, Sir, (replied the Doctor), for Burke and I should have been of one opinion, if we had had no audience."

Having been excited by the praises bestowed on the celebrated Torré's fire-works at Marybone-Gardens, he desired Mr. Steevens to accompany him thither. The evening had proved showery; and soon after the few people present were assembled, publick notice was given, that the conductors to the wheels, suns, stars, &c. were so thoroughly water-soaked, that it was impossible the exhibition should be made. "This is a mere excuse, (says the Doctor), to save their crackers for a more profitable company. Let us both hold up our sticks, and threaten to break those coloured lamps that surround the Orchestra, and we shall soon have our wishes gratified. The core of the fire-works cannot be injured; let the different pieces be touched in their respective centers; and they will do their offices as well as ever."—Some young men who overheard him, immediately began the violence he had recommended; but to little purpose were they lighted, for most of them completely failed.

Goldsmith's last Comedy was to be represented during some court-mourning; and Mr. Steevens appointed to call on Dr. Johnson, and carry him to the tavern where he was to dine with others of the Poet's friends. The Doctor was ready dressed, but in coloured cloaths; yet being told that he would find every one else in black, hastened to change his attire, all the while repeating his gratitude for the information that had saved him from an appearance so improper in the front row of a front box. "I would not (added he), for ten pounds, have seemed so retrograde to any general observance."

Happening one day to mention Mr. Flexman, the Doctor replied, "Let me hear no more of him, Sir. That is the fellow who made the Index to my Ramblers, and set down the name of Milton thus: Milton, *Mr.* John."

The anxiety of his friends made them plan for him a retreat

from the severity of a British winter, to the mild climate of Italy. The person to whom I thought I should apply to negotiate this business was the Lord Chancellor, because I knew that he highly valued Johnson, and that Johnson highly valued his Lordship. This application was utterly unknown to him.

Beattie observed, as something remarkable which had happened to him, that he had chanced to see both No. 1, and No. 1000, of the hackney-coaches, the first and the last; "Why, Sir, (said Johnson), there is an equal chance for one's seeing those two numbers as any other two."

I dined with him at General Paoli's, where, he says in one of his letters to Mrs. Thrale, "I love to dine." He seemed to me to eat so much, that I was afraid he might be hurt by it; and I whispered to the General my fear. "Alas! (said the General), see how very ill he looks; he can live but a very short time. Would you refuse any slight gratifications to a man under sentence of death?"

He entered upon a curious discussion of the difference between intuition and sagacity; one being immediate in its effect, the other requiring a circuitous process; one he observed was the *eye* of the mind, the other the *nose* of the mind. A young gentleman maintained that no man ever thinks of *the nose of the mind*. He persisted much too long. Johnson called to him in a loud tone, "What is it you are contending for if you *be* contending?" — Mr. * * * * *, it does not become you to talk so to me. Besides, ridicule is not your talent; you have *there* neither intuition nor sagacity." — The gentleman protested that he had intended no improper freedom. JOHNSON. "Give me your hand, Sir. You were too tedious, and I was too short." Mr. * * * * * "Sir, I am honoured by your attention in any way." JOHNSON. "Come, Sir, let's have no more of it. We offended one another by our contention; let us not offend the company by our compliments."

On Monday, June 28, I had the honour to receive from the Lord Chancellor the following letter:

To James Boswell.

"I am much obliged to you for the suggestion; and I will adopt and press it as far as I can. The best argument, I am sure, and I hope it is not likely to fail, is Dr. Johnson's merit. — But it will be necessary, if I should be so unfortunate as to miss seeing you, to converse with Sir Joshua on the sum it will be proper to ask, — in short, upon the means of setting him out. It would be a reflection on us all, if such a man should perish for want of the means to take care of his health.

Your's, &c.

Thurlow."

Boswell. "I am very anxious about you, Sir, and particularly that you should go to Italy for the winter, which I believe is your own wish." Johnson. "It is, Sir." Boswell. "You have no objections, I presume, but the money it would require." Johnson. "Why, no, Sir." — Upon which I gave him a particular account of what had been done, and read to him the Lord Chancellor's letter. — He listened with much attention; then warmly said, "This is taking prodigious pains about a man." — "O, Sir, (said I, with most sincere affection), your friends would do everything for you." He paused, — grew more and more agitated, — till tears started into his eyes, and he exclaimed with fervent emotion, "God bless you all." He rose suddenly and quitted the room, quite melted in tenderness. Soon after he returned I left him, having first engaged him to dine at Sir Joshua Reynolds's next day. — I never was again under that roof which I had so long reverenced.

On Wednesday, the friendly confidential dinner with Sir Joshua Reynolds took place, no other company being present. This was the last time that I should enjoy in this world, the conversation of a friend whom I so much respected, and from whom I derived so much instruction and entertainment.

He said that he would rather have his pension doubled than a grant of a thousand pounds.

Sir Joshua and I endeavoured to flatter his imagination with agreeable prospects of happiness in Italy. "Nay, (said he), I must not expect much of that; when a man goes to Italy merely to feel how he breathes the air, he can enjoy very little."

I accompanied him in Sir Joshua Reynolds's coach, to the entry of Bolt-court. He asked me whether I would not go with him to his house; I declined it, from an apprehension that my spirits would sink. We bade adieu to each other affectionately in the carriage. When he had got down upon the foot-pavement, he called out, "Fare you well;" and without looking back, sprung away with a kind of pathetick briskness, if I may use that expression, which seemed to indicate a struggle to conceal uneasiness, and impressed me with a foreboding of our long, long separation.

Soon after this time Dr. Johnson had the mortification of being informed by Mrs. Thrale, that she was going to marry Signor Piozzi, an Italian musick-master. He endeavoured to prevent it; but in vain. "Poor Thrale, I thought that either her virtue or her vice would have restrained her from such a marriage. She has now become a subject for her enemies to exult over; and for her friends, if she has any left, to forget or pity."

As a sincere friend of the great man whose Life I am writing, I think it necessary to guard my readers against the mistaken notion of Dr. Johnson's character, which this lady's "Anecdotes" of him suggest; for from the very nature and form of her book, "it lends deception lighter wings to fly."

"Let it be remembered, (says an eminent critic), that she has comprised in a small volume all that she could recollect of Dr. Johnson in *twenty years*, during which period, doubtless, some severe things were said by him: and they who read the book in *two hours*, naturally enough suppose that his whole conversation was of this complexion. But the fact is, I have been often in his company, and never *once* heard him say a severe thing; and many others can attest the same. When he did say a severe thing, it was generally extorted by igno-

rance pretending to knowledge, or by extreme vanity or affectation. Two instances of inaccuracy, (adds he) are peculiarly worthy of notice:

"It is said, '*That he once bade a very celebrated lady consider what her flattery was worth, before she choked* him *with it.*'

"Now let the genuine anecdote be contrasted with this. — 'Spare me, I beseech you, dear Madam,' was his reply. She still *laid it on.* 'Dearest lady, consider with yourself what your flattery is worth, before you bestow it so freely.'

"How different does this story appear, when accompanied with all these circumstances which really belong to it, but which Mrs. Thrale either did not know, or has suppressed.

"She says, '*One gentleman contradicted* Johnson *two or three times, petulantly enough; the master of the house began to expect disagreeable consequences; to avoid which he said, — Our friend here has no meaning now in all this, except just to relate at club to-morrow how he teazed* Johnson *at dinner to-day; this is all to do himself* honour. — *No, upon my word,* (*replied the other*), *I see no* honour *in it, whatever you may do. — Well, Sir,* (*returned* Mr. Johnson, *sternly*), *if you do not* see *the honour, I am sure I* feel *the disgrace.*'

"This is all sophisticated. The gentleman muttered in a low voice, 'I see no honour in it;' and Dr. Johnson said nothing: so all the rest, (though *bien trouvée*) is mere garnish."

This lady herself says, "*To recollect, however, and to repeat the sayings of* Dr. Johnson *is almost all that can be done by the writers of his Life; as his life, at least since my acquaintance with him, consisted in little else than talking, when he was not employed in some serious piece of work.*"

She says, "He would not stir a finger *for the assistance of those to whom he was willing enough to give advice.*"

She herself contradicts the assertion of his being obstinately defective in the *petites morales*, in the little endearing charities of social life, for she says, "Dr. Johnson *was liberal enough in granting literary assistance to others, I think; and innumerable are the prefaces, Sermons, Lectures, and Dedications which he used to make for people who begged of him.*"

She relates, that Johnson had been grossly rude to Mr. Cholmondeley. Her book was published in 1785, she had then in her possession a letter from Dr. Johnson, dated in 1777, which begins thus: "Cholmondeley's story shocks me, if it be true, which I can hardly think, for I am utterly unconscious of it: I am very sorry, and very much ashamed."

In his social intercourse she thus describes him: "*Ever musing till he was called out to converse, and conversing till the fatigue of his friends, or the promptitude of his own temper to take offence, consigned him back again to silent meditation.*" Yet, in the same book, she tells us, "*He was, however, seldom inclined to be silent, when any moral or literary question was started. On such occasions, like the Sage in* 'Rasselas,' *he spoke, and attention watched his lips; he reasoned, and conviction closed his periods.*"

The evident tendency of the following anecdote is to represent Dr. Johnson as extremely deficient in affection. "*I lamented the loss of a cousin, —* '*Prithee, my dear, (said he), have done with canting; how would the world be the worse for it, I may ask, if all your relations were at once spitted like larks, and roasted for* Presto's *supper?*' — Presto *was the dog that lay under the table while we talked.*" — The circumstances fairly appear, as told by Mr. Baretti, who was present:

"Mrs. Thrale, while supping very heartily upon larks, abruptly exclaimed, 'O, my dear Johnson, the last letters from abroad have brought us an account that our poor cousin's head was taken off by a cannon-ball.' Johnson, who was shocked both at the fact, and her light unfeeling manner of mentioning it, replied, 'Madam, it would give *you* very little concern if all your relations were spitted like those larks, and drest for Presto's supper.'" °

Johnson wrote to Sir Joshua Reynolds. "I am very desirous to avoid the appearance of asking money upon false pretences. I desire you to represent to his Lordship, what, as soon as it is suggested, he will perceive to be reasonable, — That, if I grow much worse, I shall be afraid to leave my physicians, to suffer the inconveniences of travel, and pine in the

solitude of a foreign country; — That, if I grow much better, of which indeed there is now little appearance, I shall not wish to leave my friends and my domestick comforts; for I do not travel for pleasure or curiosity; yet if I should recover, curiosity would revive. — In my present state, I am desirous to make a struggle for a little longer life, and hope to obtain some help from a softer climate. Do for me what you can."

To Dr. Brocklesby, he writes, "I am not a lover of complaints, or complainers, and yet I have since we parted, uttered nothing till now but terrour and sorrow. Write to me, dear Sir."

"On one day I had three letters about the air balloon: ° yours was far the best. In mere amusement, I am afraid it must end, for I do not find that its course can be directed so as that it should serve any purposes of communication: and it can give no new intelligence of the state of air at different heights, till they have ascended above the height of mountains, which they seem never likely to do.

"The first experiment, however, was bold, and deserved applause and reward. But since it has been performed, and its event is known, I had rather now find a medicine that can ease an asthma."

I am now grown somewhat easier in my body, but my mind is sometimes depressed. — About the Club I am in no great pain. The forfeitures go on, and the house, I hear, is improved for our future meetings. I hope we shall meet often, and sit long."

To Dr. Burney. "The weather, you know, has not been balmy; I am now reduced to think, and am at last content to talk of the weather. Pride must have a fall. — I have lost dear Mr. Allen; and wherever I turn, the dead or the dying meet my notice, and force my attention upon misery and mortality.

"My sweet Fanny, who, by her artifice of inserting her letter in yours, had given me a precept of frugality which I was not at liberty to neglect; and I know not who were in town under whose cover I could send my letter. I rejoice to hear that

you are so well, and have a delight particularly sympathetick in the recovery of Mrs. Burney."

To Mr. Langton. "A friend, at once cheerful and serious, is a great acquisition. Let us not neglect one another for the little time which providence allows us to hope."

To Sir Joshua Reynolds. "Write, do write to me now and then; we are now old acquaintance, and perhaps few people have lived so much and so long together, with less cause of complaint on either side. The retrospection of this is very pleasant, and I hope we shall never think on each other with less kindness."

"I do not despair of supporting an English winter. — At Chatsworth, I met young Mr. Burke, who led me very commodiously into conversation with the Duke and Duchess. We had a very good morning. The dinner was publick."

"I have three letters this day, all about the balloon; I could have been content with one. Do not write about the balloon, whatever else you may think proper to say."

He went for the last time to Lichfield, his native city, which by a sudden apostrophe, under the word *Lich*, he introduces into his English Dictionary: — "*Salve, magna parens!*"

He mentioned that he could not in general accuse himself of having been an undutiful son. "Once, indeed, (said he), I was disobedient; I refused to attend my father to Uttoxeter-market. Pride was the source of that refusal, and the remembrance of it was painful. A few years ago I desired to atone for this fault. I went to Uttoxeter in very bad weather, and stood for a considerable time bareheaded in the rain, on the spot where my father's stall used to stand. In contrition I stood, and I hope the penance was expiatory."

"I told him (says Miss Seward) of a wonderful learned pig, which did all that we have observed exhibited by dogs and horses. The subject amused him. 'Then, (said he), the pigs are a race unjustly calumniated. *Pig* has, it seems, not been wanting to *man*, but *man* to *pig*. We do not allow *time* for his education, we kill him at a year old. How old is your

pig?' I told him, three years old. 'Then, (said he), the pig has no cause to complain; he would have been killed the first year if he had not been *educated*, and protracted existence is a good recompence for very considerable degrees of torture.'"

As Johnson had now very faint hopes of recovery, and as Mrs. Thrale was no longer devoted to him, it might have been supposed that he would naturally have chosen to remain in the comfortable house of his beloved wife's daughter, and end his life where he began it. But there was in him an animated and lofty spirit, and however complicated diseases might depress ordinary mortals, all who saw him beheld and acknowledged the *invictum animum Catonis*. He said to one friend, "Sir, I look upon every day to be lost, in which I do not make a new acquaintance;" and to another, when talking of his illness, "I will be conquered; I will not capitulate." And such was his love of London, that he languished when absent from it. These feelings, joined, probably, to some flattering hopes of aid from the eminent physicians and surgeons in London, who kindly and generously attended him without accepting fees, made him resolve to return.

From Lichfield he came to Birmingham, where he passed a few days with his worthy old schoolfellow, Mr. Hector.

Johnson then proceeded to Oxford, where he was again kindly received by Dr. Adams, who was pleased to give me the following account. "His last visit was, I believe, to my house, which he left, after a stay of four or five days. We had much serious talk together, for which I ought to be the better as long as I live. You will remember some discourse which we had in the summer upon the subject of prayer, and the difficulty of this sort of composition. He reminded me of this. He added, that he was now in a right frame of mind, and as he could not possibly employ his time better, he would in earnest set about it.

"Prayers and Meditations" have, in pursuance of his earnest requisition, in the hopes of doing good, been published, with a judicious well-written Preface, by the reverend Mr. Strahan, to whom he delivered them.

He arrived in London on the 16th of November, and next day sent to Dr. Burney the following note.

"Mr. Johnson, who came nome last night, sends his respects to dear Dr. Burney, and all the dear Burneys, little and great."

I had the consolation of being informed that he spoke of me on his death-bed with affection.

During his sleepless nights he amused himself by translating into Latin verse, from the Greek, many of the epigrams in the *Anthologia.*

The ludicrous imitators of Johnson's style are innumerable. Their general method is to accumulate hard words, without considering, that, although he was fond of introducing them occasionally, there is not a single sentence in all his writings where they are crowded together, as in the first verse of the following imaginary Ode by him to Mrs. Thrale, which appeared in the news-papers:

"*Cervisial coctor's viduate* dame,
Opins't thou this gigantick frame,
Procumbing at thy shrine;
Shall, *catenated* by thy charms,
A captive in thy *ambient* arms,
Perennially be thine?"

Johnson's wishing to unite himself with this rich widow, was much talked of, but I believe without foundation. The report, however, gave occasion to a poem, not without characteristical merit, entitled, *Ode to Mrs. Thrale, by Samuel Johnson, LL.D. on their supposed approaching Nuptials:* printed for Mr. Faulder, in Bond Street. I shall quote as a specimen, the first three stanzas.

"If e'er my fingers touch'd the lyre,
In satire fierce, in pleasure gay;
Shall not my Thralia's smiles inspire?
Shall Sam refuse the sportive lay?

"My dearest Lady! view your slave,
Behold him as your very *Scrub;*
Eager to write as author grave,
Or govern well the brewing-tub.

"To rich felicity thus raised,
My bosom glows with amorous fire,
Porter no longer shall be praised,
'Tis I MYSELF am *Thrale's Entire.*"

To Mr. Green, Apothecary, at Lichfield.

"I HAVE enclosed the Epitaph for my Father, Mother, and Brother, to be all engraved on the large size, and laid in the middle aisle in St. Michael's-church, which I request the clergyman and churchwardens to permit.

"The first care must be to find the exact place of interment, that the stone may protect the bodies. Then let the stone be deep, massy, and hard; and do not let the difference of ten pounds, or more, defeat our purpose. SAM. JOHNSON."

To Mrs. Lucy Porter.

"I AM very ill, and desire your prayers. I have sent Mr. Green the Epitaph, and a power to call on you for ten pounds.

"I laid this summer a stone over Tetty, in the chapel of Bromley, in Kent. The inscription is in Latin.

SAM. JOHNSON."

An ingenious member of the *Eumelian Club* informs me, that upon one occasion, when he said to him that he saw health returning to his cheek, Johnson seized him by the hand and exclaimed, "Sir, you are one of the kindest friends I ever had."

About eight or ten days before his death, when Dr. Brocklesby paid him his morning visit, he seemed very low and desponding, and said, "I have been as a dying man all night." He then emphatically broke out in the words of Shakspeare,

"Can'st thou not minister to a mind diseas'd?"

To which Dr. Brocklesby readily answer'd:

"————— therein the patient
Must minister to himself."

Having asked Dr. Brocklesby what would be a proper annuity to a favourite servant, and being answered that in the case of a nobleman, fifty pounds a-year was considered as an adequate reward for many years' faithful service; — "Then, (said Johnson), shall I be *nobilissimus*, for I mean to leave Frank seventy pounds a-year."

The consideration of numerous papers of which he was possessed, seems to have struck Johnson's mind, with a sudden anxiety, as they were in great confusion. He, in a precipitate manner, burnt large masses of them, with little regard, as I apprehend, to discrimination.

Two very valuable articles, I am sure we have lost, two quarto volumes, containing a most particular account of his own life, from his earliest recollection. I owned to him, that having accidentally seen them, I had read a great deal in them; and apologizing for the liberty I had taken, asked him if I could help it. He placidly answered, "Why, Sir, I do not think you could have helped it." I said that I had, for once in my life, felt half an inclination to commit theft. It had come into my mind to carry off those two volumes, and never see him more. Upon my enquiring how this would have affected him, "Sir, (said he), I believe I should have gone mad."

Nobody was more attentive to him than Mr. Langton, to whom he tenderly said, *Te teneam moriens deficiente manu.* Mr. Langton informs me, that, "one day he found Mr. Burke and four or five more friends sitting with Johnson. Mr. Burke said to him, 'I am afraid, Sir, such a number of us may be oppressive to you.' — 'No, Sir, (said Johnson), it is not so; and I must be in a wretched state, indeed, when your company would not be a delight to me.' Mr. Burke in a tremulous voice, expressive of being very tenderly affected, replied, 'My dear Sir, you have always been too good to me.' Immediately

afterwards he went away. This was the last circumstance in the acquaintance of these two eminent men."

"He said, that the Parliamentary Debates were the only part of his writings which then gave him any compunction: but that at the time he wrote them, he had no conception he was imposing upon the world, though they were frequently written from very slender materials, and often from none at all, — the mere coinage of his own imagination."

A man whom he had never seen before was employed one night to sit up with him. Being asked next morning how he liked his attendant, his answer was, "Not at all, Sir: the fellow's an idiot; he is as awkward as a turn-spit when first put into the wheel, and as sleepy as a dormouse."

Mr. Windham having placed a pillow conveniently to support him, he thanked him for his kindness, and said, "That will do, — all that a pillow can do."

He repeated with great spirit a poem, consisting of several stanzas, in four lines, in alternate rhyme, which he said he had composed some years before, on occasion of a rich, extravagant young gentleman's coming of age:

Long-expected one-and-twenty,
Ling'ring year, at length is flown;
Pride and pleasure, pomp and plenty,
Great *******, are now your own.

Loosen'd from the Minor's tether,
Free to mortgage or to sell,
Wild as wind, and light as feather,
Bid the sons of thrift farewell.

Call the Betseys, Kates, and Jennies,
All the names that banish care;
Lavish of your grandsire's guineas,
Show the spirit of an heir.

Should the guardian friend or mother,
Tell the woes of wilful waste:
Scorn their counsel, scorn their pother, —
You can hang or drown at last.

As he opened a note which his servant brought to him, he said, "An odd thought strikes me: — we shall receive no letters in the grave."

He requested three things of Sir Joshua Reynolds: — To forgive him thirty pounds which he had borrowed of him; — to read the Bible; — and never to use his pencil on a Sunday. Sir Joshua readily acquiesced.

"I will take no more physick, not even my opiates: for I have prayed that I may render up my soul to GOD unclouded. I will take any thing but inebriating sustenance."

Having, as has been already mentioned, made his will on the 8th and 9th of December, and settled all his worldly affairs, he languished till Monday, the 13th.

"The day he died, a Miss Morris, daughter to a particular friend of his, called, and said to Francis, that she begged to be permitted to see the Doctor, that she might earnestly request him to give her his blessing. Francis went into his room, followed by the young lady, and delivered the message. The Doctor turned himself in the bed, and said, 'GOD bless you, my dear!' These were the last words he spoke."

A few days before his death, he had asked Sir John Hawkins, as one of his executors, where he should be buried; and on being answered, "Doubtless, in Westminster-Abbey," seemed to feel a satisfaction. Accordingly, upon Monday, December 20, his remains were deposited in that noble and renowned edifice; ° and over his grave was placed a large blue flagstone, with this inscription:

"SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.
Obiit XIII *die Decembris,*
Anno Domini
M.DCC.LXXXIV.
Ætatis suæ LXXV."

His funeral was attended by a respectable number of his friends, particularly such of the members of THE LITERARY CLUB as were then in town. Mr. Burke, Sir Joseph Banks, Mr. Windham, Mr. Langton, Sir Charles Bunbury, and Mr.

Coleman, bore his pall. His school-fellow, Dr. Taylor, performed the mournful office of reading the burial service. Gerard Hamilton said:

"He has made a chasm, which not only nothing can fill up, but which nothing has a tendency to fill up. — Johnson is dead. — Let us go to the next best: — there is nobody; no man can be said to put you in mind of Johnson."

When one of his little pragmatical foes was invidiously snarling at his fame, at Sir Joshua Reynolds's table, the Reverend Dr. Parr exclaimed, with his usual bold animation, "Ay, now that the old lion is dead, every ass thinks he may kick at him."

A monument for him, in Westminster-Abbey, was resolved upon; but the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's, having come to a resolution of admitting monuments there, upon a liberal and magnificent plan, that Cathedral was afterwards fixed on, as the place in which a cenotaph should be erected to his memory: and in the cathedral of his native city of Lichfield, a smaller one is to be erected.

His figure was large and well formed, and his countenance of the cast of an ancient statue; yet his appearance was rendered strange and somewhat uncouth by convulsive cramps, by the scars of that distemper which it was once imagined the royal touch could cure, and by a slovenly mode of dress. He had the use only of one eye; yet so much does mind govern, and even supply the deficiency of organs, that his visual perceptions, as far as they extended, were uncommonly quick and accurate. So morbid was his temperament, that he never knew the natural joy of a free and vigorous use of his limbs; when he walked, it was like the struggling gait of one in fetters: when he rode, he had no command or direction of his horse, but was carried as if in a balloon. That with his constitution and habits of life he should have lived seventy-five years, is a proof that an inherent *vivida vis* is a powerful preservative of the human frame.

Exulting in his intellectual strength and dexterity, he could, when he pleased, be the greatest sophist that ever contended

in the lists of declamation; and, from a spirit of contradiction, and a delight in shewing his powers, he would often maintain the wrong side with equal warmth and ingenuity; so that, when there was an audience, his real opinions could seldom be gathered from his talk. His piety was constant, and the ruling principle of all his conduct.

Such was SAMUEL JOHNSON, a man whose talents, acquirements, and virtues were so extraordinary, that the more his character is considered, the more he will be regarded by the present age, and by posterity, with admiration and reverence.

NOTES

1 : 7. the opinion which he has given. *Idler*, No. 84.

3 : 16. all resemblance of the original. *Rambler*, No. 60.

3 : 32. every market-day. Boswell quotes from a letter dated 1716 and published in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, October, 1791 : "Johnson, the Lichfield librarian . . . propagates learning all over this diocese. All the clergy are his pupils." So, too, were the attorneys.

3 : 34. distinguished understanding. Yet Johnson, in that account of his early years, — which Boswell never saw, — wrote that his parents were not altogether congenial. The mother was of better lineage ; the father disdained talking with her of his books. "Neither of them ever tried to calculate the profits of trade or the expenses of living."

4 : 23. kennel. Gutter.

5 : 14. touched by Queen Anne. See *Macbeth* IV. iii, and "Sir Roger de Coverley at Westminster Abbey." Queen Anne "touched" in one day more than two hundred persons. Johnson describes himself as "a poor diseased infant, almost blind." Boswell suggested that the touch of an *exiled* Stuart might have been more efficacious : that his mother should have taken him to *Rome*. With characteristic tenderness Johnson writes of a silver cup and spoon which his mother bought for him in London. "The cup was one of the last pieces of plate which dear Tetty sold in our distress. I have now the spoon. She bought at the time two teaspoons, and, till my manhood, she had no more."

6: 15. **a little varied.** See *King Henry VI*, Part II. Act IV. scene X. "Sword, I will hallow thee for this thy deed."

7: 34. **stark insensibility.** Boswell says that Johnson, having once discovered a fault in himself, was "apt to overcharge" it.

8: 3. **horrible hypochondria.** "He strove to overcome it by forcible exertions" such as walking to Birmingham and back. He wrote in Latin an account of his illness for Dr. Swinfen, his physician and godfather.

8: 8. "**The Whole Duty of Man.**" Probably by Dr. Allestree: termed by Cowper as "a repository of self-righteousness and pharisaical lumber." Addison (*Spectator* 568) speaks of "a book against the Squire and the whole parish." It is frequently quoted in Johnson's Dictionary.

10: 35. **of the name of Aston.** Mrs. Thrale once asked Dr. Johnson what had been the happiest time of his life. He replied that it was when he spent a whole evening in the company of Molly Aston. "Molly," said he, "was a beauty and a scholar and a wit and a Whig, and she talked all in praise of liberty; and so I made this epigram upon her, — she was the loveliest creature I ever saw. 'Liber ut esse velim suasisti, pulchra Maria; Ut maneam liber, pulchra Maria, vale.'" Mrs. Thrale attempted a translation, which Johnson said was "pretty good for a lady. The ladies never liked Molly Aston." *You have persuaded me, my lovely Mary, that I ought to be free. That I may remain free, I bid you, lovely Mary, adieu.* Molly married Captain Brodie of the Navy; Margaret married Gilbert Walmsley; Catherine married Henry Hervey, Johnson's friend; and another sister married the Rev. Mr. Gastrel who cut down Shakespeare's mulberry tree.

11: 21. **afterwards married.** It was Mrs. Porter's money, no doubt, that leased and equipped the "academy." Her

sons, then struggling to make their own way in the world, could hardly have approved of the marriage. The sea-captain left his sister, Lucy, ten thousand pounds, with which she built herself a house in Lichfield. One of the best notes on Johnson's married life is as follows: —

"I asked him, if he ever disputed with his wife. 'Perpetually,' said he. 'My wife had a particular reverence for cleanliness, and desired the praise of neatness in her dress and furniture as many ladies do, till they become troublesome to their best friends, slaves to their own besoms, and only sigh for the hour of sweeping their husbands out of the house as dirt and useless lumber. "A clean floor is so comfortable," she would say sometimes by way of twitting; till at last I told her that I thought we had had talk enough about the floor, we would now have a touch at the ceiling!' I asked him if he ever huffed his wife about his dinner. 'So often,' replied he, 'that at last she called to me and said, "Nay, hold, Mr. Johnson, and do not make a farce of thanking God for a dinner which in a few minutes you will protest not eatable."'" — Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes.*

13: 17. **guide to novices.** The school continued for less than two years. Boswell inserts at this point Johnson's "Scheme for the Classes of a Grammar School."

13: 32. **for the stage.** Johnson once amused the dinner party by alluding to the time "when I came with two-pence half-penny in my pocket, and thou, Davy, with three halfpence in thine."

14: 17. **Henry Hervey.** Pope had satirized Henry's elder brother as Lord Fanny in his Imitation of Horace, 1st Satire, 2d Book, and as Sporus in the Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot.

15: 19. **in the Gentleman's Magazine.** Published by Cave at St. John's Gate. Signing himself S. Smith, Johnson had in 1734 proposed to furnish for the magazine "poems, inscriptions, short literary dissertations in Latin or English,

or critical remarks," suggesting that its pages would thus "be better recommended to the public than by low jests, awkward buffoonery, or the dull scurrilities of either party." However, when he did write he "took care to see that the Whig dogs did not get the best of it." He attacked Walpole, whose policy was to range, as the adherents of the Pretender all his own enemies, something which seemed not impossible, as Tory and Jacobite, after a long opposition to the Court, had become almost identified. Johnson did not avow the authorship of the Debates until long afterwards. He told Boswell "that as soon as he found that the speeches were thought genuine, he determined to write no more of them; for he would not be accessary to the propagation of falsehood." While Johnson wrote, the circulation of the magazine increased from ten thousand to fifteen thousand.

17: 12. **degree from Dublin.** Swift was then Dean of St. Patrick's. Gower wrote that Johnson was not afraid of the strictest examination and would make the journey to Dublin "choosing rather to die upon the road than be starved to death in translating for booksellers." Trinity in 1765 made Johnson Doctor of Laws.

17: 21. **a powerful advocate.** In "The False Alarm," and "Taxation no Tyranny."

17: 25. **had not a dinner.** He had signed himself: "Yours, impransus, Johnson."

18: 23. **paper-sparing Pope.** "The manuscript of his translations of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, preserved in the British Museum, is written mostly on the backs of letters." Note by Mr. Mowbrary Morris, Globe Ed. The following are Swift's lines in his "Advice to Grub Street Writers":—

"Get all your verses printed fair,
Then let them well be dried:
And Curll must have a special care
To leave the margin wide.
Lend them to paper-sparing Pope,
And when he sits to write,
No letter with an envelope
Could give him more delight."

19: 5. **from a habit.** So Johnson told a little girl who asked him about his strange gestures. Dr. Hill, IV. 211.

19: 32. **Phillips.** Charles. He was admired "for absolute contempt of riches and his inimitable performances upon the violin." — From his epitaph.

23: 17. **The authorities.** Johnson read and marked writers whose usage he considered best and quite orthodox. He said that the words had to be collected "from the boundless chaos of living speech." He quoted Reynolds, Garrick, Gray, Richardson, and himself; but chiefly dead authors. He probably added the word "veracious" to the language. The Dictionary was published in two volumes in 1755, and sold for £4 10*s.* bound.

23: 29. **Dr. Richard Bathurst.** "Bathurst, the best of friends, to whom I stand indebted for all the little virtue and knowledge that I have," quoted by Dr. Hill from Harewood's *History of Lichfield*. Dr. Bathurst died in Havana. Johnson wrote: "Dear Bathurst was a man to my heart's content: he hated a fool and he hated a rogue and he hated a Whig: he was a good hater." — Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes*.

24: 5. **The Vanity of Human Wishes.** Sir Walter Scott said that this poem and Johnson's "London" gave him more pleasure than any others.

24: 36. **behind the scenes.** The idea of strangling on the stage was Garrick's. Johnson cleared about £300.

26: 2. **and I took it.** Garrick had proposed as a name: "The Sallad." Dr. Hill notes that all but five of the 208 numbers are Johnson's own. He shows the probability of Goldsmith's having taken from *Rambler*, No. 34, the incident of Mrs. Hardcastle's being driven in terror round her own estate. Dr. Burney said facetiously that Johnson wrote the papers to explain the words in his dictionary. The authorship was a secret save to a very few. Cave wrote, "Mr. Johnson is the great Rambler, being, as you observe, the only man who can furnish two such papers in a week besides his other great business."

27: 10. **its pointed satire.** "If Garrick was aimed at," says Dr. Hill, "it is surprising that the severity of the satire did not bring to an end, not only all friendship, but even any acquaintance between the two men."

27: 12. **Addison and Johnson.** Johnson said that Addison's style was "pure without scrupulosity." Dr. Gurney considered the difference to be this: that Johnson's style would present fewer difficulties to the translator.

31: 27. **Bishop.** In his Dictionary Johnson gives: "A cant word for a mixture of wine, oranges, and sugar."

34: 1. **talk of the town.** Johnson said to Garrick: "I have sailed a long and painful journey round the world of the English language, and does he now send out two cock-boats to tow me into harbour?" — MURPHY'S *Johnson*.

34: 24. **respectable Hottentot.** This satire was more probably aimed at Sir George Lyttleton, whom Smollett ridiculed in *Roderick Random*.

36: 12. πεπόνθαμεν. "Alas! But why say *alas?* We have suffered what all mortals have to suffer." This is from a fragment of *Bellerophon*, a long-lost tragedy by Euripides.

38 : 16. his own opinions. Some of the definitions are: "**Network**, anything reticulated or decussated at equal distances, with interstices between the intersections. **Oats**, a grain which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people. **Pension**, in England is generally understood to mean pay given to a state hireling for treason to his country. **Whig**, the name of a faction. **Tory**, one who adheres to the ancient constitution of the State and the apostolical hierarchy of the Church of England. **Excise**, a hateful tax levied upon commodities and adjudged, not by the common judges of property but by wretches hired by those to whom Excise is paid."

40 : 15. defence of tea. Dr. Hill quotes from Cumberland's Memoirs: "I remember that when Sir Joshua Reynolds at my house reminded Dr. Johnson that he had drank eleven cups, he replied: 'Sir, I did not count your glasses of wine; why should you count my cups of tea?' And then laughingly in perfect good humour, he added, — 'Sir, I should have released the lady from any further trouble if it had not been for your remark; but you have reminded me that I want one of the dozen, and I must request Mrs. Cumberland to round up the number.'"

40 : 26. Soame Jenyns. That he was "possessed of lively talents" is proved by his "Epitaph on Dr. Johnson."

> "Here lies poor Johnson. Reader, have a care,
> Tread lightly, lest you rouse a sleeping bear;
> Religious, moral, generous, and humane
> He was — but self-sufficient, rude, and vain;
> Ill-bred and over-bearing in dispute,
> A scholar and a Christian — yet a brute.
> Would you know all his wisdom and his folly,
> His actions, sayings, mirth, and melancholy,
> Boswell and Thrale, retailers of his wit,
> Will tell you how he wrote, and talk'd, and cough'd and spit."

41: 15. **Doddy.** Robert Dodsley, author of *Cleone.*

41: 25. **twenty guineas a head . . . Miss.** Sir Joshua received more as his reputation increased: for "The Three Ladies Waldegrave," one thousand guineas. He laughed at his sister's attempts at portrait painting. Johnson, although he considered it "immodest for a woman to be staring in people's faces," sat for her. He said she was the only one of his acquaintance whose mind would bear the microscopic test for purity. After reading the speech on Conciliation, she said she could not tell which side Burke had taken.

41: 27. **Mr. Charles Burney.** The following extract from a letter to Mrs. Thrale is typical of Johnson's frequent expressions of regard for the Burneys: "I love all of that breed whom I can be said to know, and one or two whom I hardly know I love upon credit, and love them because they love each other." These talented people knew the best in society and letters. Frances, as Second Keeper of the Robes to the Queen, saw much of court life. Her journal, covering a period of seventy-two years and known as the Diary of Mme. D'Arblay, is a most interesting commentary upon men and manners of the time.

43: 29. **Rasselas.** The name was made up from terms used in Lobo's *Voyage to Abyssinia.* "Ras" = chief.

44: 11. **climbing over the wall.** Once, at Langton's, Johnson emptied all his pockets and insisted on rolling down a long steep hill.

44: 22. **great Cham of literature.** The "Cham" or "Chan" was sovereign of Tartary; cf. "Genghis Khan," the great Khan of the thirteenth century, Chaucer's "Cambynskan."

44: 22. **Servant.** Francis Barber was born in Jamaica, and was brought to England in 1750 by Colonel Bathurst, father of Johnson's very intimate friend, Dr. Bathurst. He was sent,

for some time, to the Reverend Mr. Jackson's school, at Barton, in Yorkshire. The Colonel by his will left him his freedom, and Dr. Bathurst was willing that he should enter into Johnson's service, in which he continued from 1752 till Johnson's death, with the exception of two intervals; in one of which, upon some difference with his master, he went and served an apothecary in Cheapside, but still visited Dr. Johnson occasionally; in another, he took a fancy to go to sea. Part of the time, indeed, he was, by the kindness of his master, at a school in Northamptonshire (Boswell). To him was given Mrs. Johnson's wedding ring, see p. 28, — and the account of Johnson's early life.

47 : 26. against the dockers. Johnson was once inclined to express some indignation upon seeing a man throw snails over the wall into a neighbor's garden, until he was informed that the neighbor was a *Whig*.

48 : 5. A memorable year. 1763.

51 : 21. Gray a first-rate poet. How can Johnson's insensibility to the genius of Gray be accounted for? He said there was some merit in, "Yet who to dumb forgetfulness," and a few stanzas following. "Gray walks tip-toe in his Odes."

52 : 31. Pomposo. Churchill's best lines are: —

> "Pomposo insolent and loud,
> Vain idol of a scribbling crowd:
> Whose very name inspires an awe,
> Whose every word is sense and law."

53 : 6. undeceived the world. In Hare's *Walks in London* there is an account of the ghost. See Andrew Lang's "The Cock Lane Ghost." Boswell gives Johnson's account, which is as follows: —

"On the night of the 1st of February, many gentlemen eminent for their rank and character, were, by the invitation of the Reverend

Mr. Aldrich, of Clerkenwell, assembled at his house, for the examination of the noises supposed to be made by a departed spirit, for the detection of some enormous crime.

"About ten at night the gentlemen met in the chamber in which the girl, supposed to be disturbed by a spirit, had, with proper caution, been put to bed by several ladies. They sat rather more than an hour, and hearing nothing, went down stairs, when they interrogated the father of the girl, who denied, in the strongest terms, any knowledge or belief of fraud.

"The supposed spirit had before publickly promised, by an affirmative knock, that it would attend one of the gentlemen into the vault under the church of St. John, Clerkenwell, where the body is deposited, and give a token of her presence there, by a knock upon her coffin; it was therefore determined to make this trial of the existence or veracity of the supposed spirit.

"While they were enquiring and deliberating, they were summoned into the girl's chamber by some ladies who were near her bed, and who had heard knocks and scratches. When the gentlemen entered, the girl declared that she felt the spirit like a mouse upon her back, and was required to hold her hands out of bed. From that time, though the spirit was very solemnly required to manifest its existence by appearance, by impression on the hand or body of any present, by scratches, knocks, or any other agency, no evidence of any preternatural power was exhibited.

"The Spirit was then very seriously advertised that the person to whom the promise was made of striking the coffin, was then about to visit the vault, and that the performance of the promise was then claimed. The company at one o'clock went into the church and the gentleman to whom the promise was made, went with another into the vault. The spirit was solemnly required to perform its promise, but nothing more than silence ensued; the person supposed to be accused by the spirit, then went down with several others, but no effect was perceived. Upon their return they examined the girl, but could draw no confession from her. Between two and three she desired and was permitted to go home with her father.

"It is, therefore, the opinion of the whole assembly, that the child has some art of making or counterfeiting a particular noise, and that there is no agency of any higher cause."

53: 33. **un étourdi.** A *blunderer*, whom Horace Walpole called "an inspired idiot" and of whom Garrick wrote:—

"for shortness called Noll,
Who wrote like an angel and talked like poor Poll."

After the puppet show mentioned, he went home, says Boswell, with Burke to supper and broke his shins by attempting to exhibit to the company how much better he could jump over a stick than the puppets could. He once splashed into a fountain at Versailles in trying to prove that it was not within jumping distance. For "the beautiful young ladies," the Miss Hornecks, read *The Jessamy Bride*. Fanny Burney and Mrs. Thrale were one day admiring *The Vicar of Wakefield*, when Dr. Johnson remarked that it "had nothing of real life in it."

56 : 23. for an Historian. Not the modern view. Johnson's contemporaries were Hume, Gibbon, and Robertson. Burke said that Hume took little pains to look into historical sources.

58 : 32. case of my death. Boswell left his papers to Malone, Temple, and Forbes. The executors, through indifference or lack of energy, allowed the papers to go so long unclaimed that many were no doubt destroyed. Dr. Hill says, "The indolence of Malone and Temple and the brutish ignorance of the Boswells have much to answer for."

61 : 18. one Mrs. Macaulay. She wrote a history of England from the accession of James I to the Revolution. Johnson frequently "stripped" her of her republican cant, although he said that "to make her ridiculous was as unnecessary as to blacken the chimney."

62 : 8. Sherry. Thomas, father of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, the dramatist.

63 : 16. a deep impression. This is one of the three principles that have made for the success of the Salvation Army.

63 : 26. Formosam etc.

"Thou teachest every grove to whisper, 'Loveliest Amaryllis.'"

Compare this for melody with Keats' :—

> "Charmed magic casements opening on the foam
> Of perilous seas in faery lands forlorn."

65 : 5. Presbyterian Kirk. Baretti said Johnson would have made "a good Spanish Inquisitor: he was tooth and nail against toleration." He would not, while in Scotland, be present at a Presbyterian service, though in France he attended the Catholic.

66 : 30. Synod of Cooks. From Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes* must be quoted : " A leg of pork boiled till it dropped from the bone, a veal pie with plums and sugar, or the outside cut of a salt buttock of beef were his favourite dainties." Johnson, as Boswell frequently remarks, was not temperate. He wrote to Mrs. Thrale (Piozzi) : " Would you have me cross my genius when it leads me sometimes to voracity and sometimes to abstinence? "

67 : 6. one of the most luminous minds. Burke's. His " Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful " and " Vindication of Natural Society " appeared in 1756.

68 : 12. The Literary Club. " Esto perpetua " was the motto and toast. Johnson's plan was that there should be nine members any two of whom should be able to entertain each other were there no more in attendance. Monday was the original meeting night, changed later to Friday. Sir John Hawkins says that the members gathered about nine, that supper was ready about ten and over about eleven. " This famous club though moving from place to place in the closing years of the last century still preserved its identity ; it took a new lease of life in the first quarter of the nineteenth century and it survived in a very quiet old age, holding its fortnightly meetings —rather sparingly attended it is true —

at Willis's Rooms, St. James's Street. Among recent members may be named Gladstone, Sir Frederick Leighton, Lord Salisbury, the Duke of Argyle, Tennyson, and Matthew Arnold." D. G. Mitchell. Mr. Asquith is now a member. See R. Nevill, London Clubs.

68: 26. **Sir John Hawkins.** Johnson's executor and author of the first Life of Johnson. Boswell said that by *his* "Life" he "hoped to make Sir John Hawkins feel some compunction for his illiberal treatment of Dr. Johnson." He had been a member of the earlier club at the King's Head, Ivy Lane, yet Johnson called him "an unclubable man"; he churlishly declined to pay his share of the supper bill, because he "took no supper at home." Boswell has already mentioned him, p. 23, contemptuously, as "an attorney."

70: 34. **the family of Mr. Thrale.** Boswell wrote to Temple, "Mr. Thrale is a worthy sensible man, and has the wits much about his house; but he is not one himself." Some ten years after their first meeting Johnson wrote to Mrs. Thrale: "I can not but think on your kindness and my master's. Life has, upon the whole, fallen short of my early expectations; but the acquisition of such a friendship at an age when new friendships are seldom acquired is something better than the general course of things gives a man to expect. I think on it with great delight. I am not apt to be delighted." Concerning Mrs. Thrale Dr. Hill quotes from the "Memoirs of Dr. Burney": Miss Burney described her as "extremely lively and chatty, showing none of the supercilious or pedantic airs so scoffingly attributed to women of learning or celebrity; on the contrary, she is full of sport, remarkably gay, and excessively agreeable. I liked her in everything except her entrance into the room, which was rather florid and flourishing as who should say, — 'It is I — no less a person than Mrs. Thrale!' However, all that

ostentation wore out in the course of the visit, which lasted the whole morning, and you could not have helped liking her, she is so very entertaining — though not simple enough, I believe, for quite winning your heart." She was evidently capricious, heedless, inaccurate, and indiscreet: her foibles exposed her to the sneer of Baretti, — "faultless female!" Hogarth portrays her features in "The Lady's Last Stake."

74: 18. **Rousseau and Wilkes.** Naturally the shams rather than the merits of Rousseauism engaged Dr. Johnson's attention. "Sending him to *work* in the plantations" was not without humor. Wilkes was in exile at this time.

76: 26. **came next to the library.** All the notes go back to Lord Northcote's. He observed that the king was probably the more frightened of the two. One more meeting took place. For Boswell's eight-page pamphlet, 1790, "A Conversation between His Most Sacred Majesty, George III and Samuel Johnson, LL.D.," the publishers asked half a guinea.

79: 16. **Fielding and Richardson.** Johnson's preference for Richardson is another of his literary aberrations; yet, save for her broken nose, he thought Amelia the most attractive of heroines. See p. 98. See Hill, II. 199.

82: 10. **at the Jubilee.** The Stratford festivals were instituted by Garrick. Boswell attended in the costume of a Corsican patriot, with "Corsica Boswell" on a ribbon round his hat.

82: 21. **Your History.** In Corsica, Boswell had met General Paoli, and at the general's luxurious London house he later almost made his home. Walpole called Boswell "that quintessence of busybodies." Dr. Hill quotes from Walpole's letter to Gray: "Pray read the new account of Corsica. The author is a strange being and has a rage of knowing everybody that ever was talked of. He forced himself upon me at Paris in spite of my teeth and my doors."

Gray replied: "The pamphlet proves what I have always maintained, — that any fool may write a most valuable book by chance if he will only tell us what he heard and saw with veracity." Admiration for the history led General Oglethorpe to seek Boswell out. "Sir, my name is Oglethorpe. I wish to be acquainted with you."

85 : 17. so absurd a colour. On the same bill, which will be found in Prior's *Life of Goldsmith*, was a "blue velvet suit" and "garter blue silk breeches," and a "Queen's blue dress suit."

86 : 6. nobody else honour. This was the Essay on Shakespeare. No doubt Mrs. Montagu's reputation and her prominence were far in advance of her real ability. Lord Kames said she knew no more than a college lad of sixteen. Johnson, however, agreed with Mrs. Thrale as to her being "the most learned woman in the world. She diffuses more knowledge in her conversation than any woman I know, or indeed, almost any man." See Hill, IV. 75–76. Dr. Johnson urged Miss Burney to attack her. "You are a rising wit and she is at the top, and when I was beginning the world and was nothing and nobody, the joy of my life was to fire at all the established wits and then everybody loved to halloo me on." — Mme. D'Arblay's *Diary*.

86 : 33. Baretti. Although a man of excitable temperament, he seems not to have been responsible for the brawl in which he was attacked. Burke, Garrick, Reynolds, and Fitzherbert went his bail. He was the Italian tutor of the Thrales, — for a long time almost an intimate in the household: but he left it suddenly, indignant over a fancied neglect. He had no liking for Boswell; thought him erratic.

87 : 26. of a peevish temper. Dr. Hill quotes several passages showing that she was not only refined but gracious.

92 : 4. Two young women. Rossetti's painting, "Dr. Johnson and the Methodist Ladies at the Mitre," is an impres-

sive piece of realism. It is reproduced in Miss Cary's "The Rossettis." For Maxwell, Rossetti substituted Boswell.

95 : 4. mysterious champion, Junius. The mystery is still unsolved. Proofs seem strongest for Sir Philip Francis, although it is known that Sackville on his death-bed made some confession of a very grave nature to Lord Mansfield. Johnson thought Burke wrote the "Letters." Walpole said three men were suspected: Wilkes, W. G. Hamilton, and Burke.

95 : 20. try my hand now. But North's political sagacity, such as it was, kept Johnson out. Croker's note is to the effect that North feared that "Johnson, like the elephant in battle, was quite as likely to trample down his friends as his foes."

95 : 22. my portrait. Reynolds painted four; this was the second. When Sir Joshua sketched him holding a pen close to his eyes, Johnson cried, "He may paint himself as deaf, but I'll not be made a blinking Sam!" "Ugly dog," he exclaimed, looking over the shoulder of Miss Burney, who held a portrait of him. Dr. Hill gives a complete list of portraits, IV. 486.

96 : 7. a motto for your Goat. Thus translated by a friend:—

> "In fame scarce second to the nurse of Jove,
> This Goat, who twice the world had traversed round,
> Deserving both her master's care and love,
> Ease and perpetual pasture now has found." — Boswell.

100 : 8. Sappho in Ovid. She warned Phaon that it would be impossible to find a mate just like himself.

> "If to no charms thou wilt thy heart resign,
> But such as merit, such as equal thine,
> By none, alas! by none thou canst be mov'd,
> Phaon alone by Phaon must be lov'd." — Pope.

101 : 25. valuable editions. Mme. D'Arblay writes: "Garrick gave a thundering stamp on some mark on the carpet that struck his eye — not with passion or displeasure, but merely as if from singularity and took off Dr. Johnson's voice in a short dialogue with himself that had passed the preceding week. 'David, will you lend me your Petrarca?' 'Y-e-s, sir.' 'David, you sigh.' 'Sir, you shall have it, certainly.' Garrick sent the book *stupendously bound* that very evening. 'But scarcely had he taken it in his hands, when, as Boswell tells me, he poured forth a Greek ejaculation and a couplet or two from Horace, and then, in one of those fits of enthusiasm, which always seem to require that he should spread his arms aloft, he suddenly pounces my poor Petrarca over his head upon the floor, and then standing, for several minutes lost in abstraction, he forgot probably that he had ever seen it.'"

103 : 2. your masquerade. At Edinburgh. Boswell had gone as a dumb conjurer.

103 : 14. a new comedy. "She Stoops to Conquer." It already had the title: "The Mistakes of a Night." Sir Joshua Reynolds, to whom it was dedicated, suggested "The Belle's Stratagem." It was performed at Covent Garden, March, 1773, with brilliant success, although manager and actors had expected failure.

105 : 21. in good order. Johnson confessed to Mrs. Thrale that "anarchy prevailed in his own kitchen; that Desmoulins had charge: that there was no jack; that small joints were suspended to roast on a string and large ones sent to the baker's."

110 : 33. puzzled by an argument. This was not quite just; for, says Lockhart, "The allusion is not to *The Tale of a Tub*, but to *The History of John Bull IV*, where, however, Jack does not hang himself for any such reason; but the mis-

representation turned the laugh against Boswell, which was all Johnson cared for."

111: 22. **miscebitur istis.** "With these, perchance, our names shall be enrolled." It is said that these were heads of traitors executed during the second Jacobite Rebellion.

111: 30. **have the precedence.** Johnson, through Sir Joshua Reynolds's influence, was the first to be honored by a monument in St. Paul's.

116: 36. **awful, melancholy, and venerable Johnson.** Dr. Hill says that Boswell surely makes too little of Johnson's talent for admirable fooling — so richly attested by Murphy, Hawkins, Miss Burney, and Mrs. Piozzi. He said to Fanny Burney that every one had sometime in his life a desire to be a wag; Mrs. Piozzi says that he measured a man's understanding by his mirth.

117: 29. **have not been disappointed.**

"In this he shewed a very acute penetration. My wife paid him the most assiduous and respectful attention, while he was our guest; so that I wonder how he discovered her wishing for his departure. The truth is, that his irregular hours and uncouth habits, such as turning the candles with their heads downwards, when they did not burn bright enough, and letting the wax drop upon the carpet, could not but be disagreeable to a lady. Besides, she had not that high admiration of him which was felt by most of those who knew him; and what was very natural to a female mind, she thought he had too much influence over her husband. She once, in a little warmth, made, with more point than justice, this remark upon that subject: 'I have seen many a bear led by a man; but I never before saw a man led by a bear.'" — Boswell.

118: 1. **Maria Scotorum Regina.** "Mary Queen of Scots, fallen on evil days, perforce resigns to her rebellious subjects her own royal rights." Notice how Johnson in his reply changes the style: "Mary Queen of Scots, born 15 –; sent by her own people into exile 15 —; and by her to whom she looked

for protection handed over to death 15 —." He afterwards sent to Boswell the following inscription and translation:—

"*Maria Scotorum Regina,*
Hominum seditiosorum
Contumeliis lassata,
Minis territa clamoribus victa,
Libello, per quem
Regno ceait,
Lacrimans trepidansque
Nomen apponit."

"Mary, Queen of Scots,
Harrassed, terrified, and overpowered
By the insults, menaces,
And clamours
Of her rebellious subjects,
Sets her hand,
With tears and confusion,
To a resignation of the kingdom."

118 : 20. following tetrastick.

"Here Goldsmith lies. O ye, who deeds of old,
Or Nature's works, or sacred song regard,
With reverence tread; for he in all excelled:
Historian, and Philosopher, and Bard."
— CROKER'S TRANSLATION.

119 : 5. about the Americans. This year, 1775, is the date of "Taxation, No Tyranny" (published anonymously), and of Burke's speech on Conciliation. Dr. Hill ascribes Johnson's hatred of the Americans to the fact of their holding slaves. He quotes Johnson: "The fear that the American colonies will break off their dependence upon England I have always thought chimerical and vain. They must be dependent, and, if they forsake us or be forsaken by us, fall into the hands of France." Dr. Hill quotes Hume, 1775. "I wish they would advise him (the king) to punish those insolent rascals in London and Middlesex who daily insult

him and the whole legislature, before he thinks of America. Ask him how he can expect that form of government will maintain an authority at three thousand miles distance when it can not make itself respected or even be treated with common decency at home."

119: 10. **to tell lies.** Johnson said, too, that "the Highlander, by a kind of intellectual retrogradation, knows less as he learns more. They are not much accustomed to be interrogated by others and seem never to have thought upon interrogating themselves; so that, if they do not know what they tell to be true, they likewise do not distinctly perceive it to be false." Quoted by Dr. Hill.

119: 12. **Mr. James Macpherson.** Hume said Macpherson had "not arguments, but testimonies." Gosse says: "The Ossian problem has not proved so easy of solution as the Rowley problem." The original manuscript of Johnson's letter was sold for £50. It is not in the British Museum.

122: 29. **want a Chancellor.** This was a thrust at Lord Clarendon.

123: 3. **the Reverend Mr. Temple.** In his Introduction to the Globe Edition of the "Life," Mr. Mowbray Morris says:—

"The Rev. William Temple, whose name often occurs in the biography, had been in Boswell's closest confidence since they had studied together at Glasgow University. He survived his friend only one year, dying in 1796, when all his papers passed into the hands of his son-in-law, a Mr. Powlett. Powlett soon afterwards retired to France, and died there, and the papers, so far as the family could tell, disappeared with him. Between forty and fifty years ago a clergyman, purchasing some articles in a shop at Boulogne, noticed that the paper in which they were wrapped was the fragment of an English letter. A date and some names were detected; the fragment was found to be part of a large bundle of paper lately purchased from a French hawker. How it came into his hands could never be ascertained; the Fates had been gracious enough, and would lift

the veil no further. The bundle was at once secured, and in 1857 the correspondence was published by Mr. Bentley. The curiosities of literary history can show few happier chances than those which have so marvellously rescued from oblivion these two interesting contributions to the great Johnsonian cycle."

The "two" are Boswell's letters to Temple and Dr. Thomas Campbell's Diary: see p. 127, note.

125: 29. **to tell.** In a letter to Miss Boothby, Johnson recommended for indigestion powdered orange peel in hot port wine.

126: 24. **Bouts rimés.** At the fêtes of Lady Miller, a woman of fashion and "patroness of art and letters," the competitors deposited their verses in a classic urn. The Duchess of Northumberland wrote "On a Buttered Muffin."

127: 10. **Dr. Thomas Campbell.** An Irish clergyman, who, on his visits to London, met most of the people worth knowing. He kept a diary, which in all likelihood was intrusted to one of his nephews, who held a political office in Sidney, New South Wales. Here the diary, some seventy-five years after it was written, was found in an office of the Supreme Court behind a press long unmoved. Macaulay's interest in its discovery led to its publication in England in 1859.

130: 7. **ludicrous imitation of his style.** Young's is exquisite. It purports to be a criticism of Gray done by Johnson: "Gray should have seen that it but ill befitted the Bird of Wisdom to complain to the Moon of an intrusion which the Moon could no more help than herself." Boswell gives near the end of the "Life" serious imitations by Dr. Robertson, Gibbon, Miss Burney, and Mr. Wares.

132: 9. **Gaudium, Luctus.** Every feast-day and every fast-day. Such a "Gaudy" was the fifth of November, when Oxford juniors marched round and round the fire in

the college halls. When Johnson visited Oxford in 1776, he was invited to a Gaudy at Christ Church, but could not attend because of an engagement to dine at University College.

132: 27. **mansions of Bedlam.** One of Hogarth's "subjects."

Bedlam was then one of the sights of London, like the Abbey and the Tower, to which the public were admitted on payment of a small fee, and allowed even to talk to the maniacs. — CROKER.

134: 23. **Versailles.** The student should consult a guidebook for information as to the places Johnson visited. **Miss** was Mrs. Thrale's daughter; **Mrs. Fermor, Abbess** was a niece of Arabella Fermor, the Belinda of "The Rape of the Lock"; **Sans Terre** conducted Louis XVI to his execution.

136: 27. **24L.** Livre. Modern franc, value about 20 cents.

137: 26. **Queen mount in the forest.** The King's aunts thought it improper that the young queen should ride, and gave their consent at last only on the condition that she should not mount in the palace yard.

142: 1. **characterised** Voltaire. "A man of keenest mind, whose acquaintance with literature was slight."

143: 13. **a new sense.** According to Hawkins Johnson said that music hindered the flow of his thoughts. When some one praising a performer said the piece was difficult, Johnson exclaimed, "I would it had been impossible!"

146: 6. **Johnsoniana.** Shortened sometimes to "Ana." The Bon-Mots are said to be both coarse and dull.

149: 27. **Shenstone's lines.** "We happened," says Boswell, "to lie this night at the inn at Henley where Shenstone wrote these lines." Hawkins's note is, "I have heard him assert that a tavern chair was the throne of human felicity.

"As soon (said he) as I enter the door of a tavern, I experience an oblivion of care, and a freedom from solicitude: when I am seated, I find the master courteous, and the servants obsequious to my call; anxious to know and ready to supply my wants: wine there exhilarates my spirits, and prompts me to free conversation and an interchange of discourse with those whom I most love: I dogmatise and am contradicted, and in this conflict of opinion and sentiments I find delight."

153: 24. **pronounced woonse.** In parts of New England a similar pronunciation of *does* is sometimes heard.

155: 2. **Miss Anna Seward.** "The Swan of Lichfield." Her verse has been much ridiculed, but it contains some lines of distinction. Leslie Stephen describes her as "a typical specimen of provincial précieuse."

158: 5. **of procuring respect.** What is the theme of *Sartor Resartus?*

161: 23. **money-scrivener.** One of the London companies whose duties were later performed by attorneys. Boswell says this Mr. Ellis was the last in the profession.

164: 1. **the Reviews.** The *Critical Review*, founded and edited by Smollett, was pro-Stuart. The *Monthly* was Whig and Nonconformist.

164: 33. **Abel Drugger.** In Ben Jonson's *Alchemist*.

165: 13. **A journey to Italy.** Hawkins says that the Italians looked forward eagerly to the visit of Johnson.

166: 10. **Sixteen-string Jack.** A gentleman highwayman, hanged at last. His knee ribbons had sixteen ends.

171: 8. **Mr. Gibbon.** It is impossible to resist noting here Cobman's description of him, "His mouth, mellifluous as Plato's, was a round hole in the center of his visage." Boswell hated Gibbon, said that Gibbon "poisoned the club" for him. He meant to include Gibbon in "infidel wasps and venomous insects."

171: 18. **asses of great charge.** The Variorum edition has, of course, Johnson's notes on these two passages.

172: 13. **the pastoral office.** This advice was given in response to Boswell's request. Boswell's client, a minister, had publicly censured two members of his congregation, who retaliated by a suit at law. Boswell defended the liberty of the pulpit, a subject on which Johnson had strong prejudices.

178: 36. **acquaintance with Mrs. Rudd.** This was probably because of her fascinating tongue. She was tried for forgery and would have been hanged — as were her accomplices — had she not saved herself by clever pleading.

180: 8. **Round Robin.** The following signatures appear upon the margin: Jos. Warton, Edm. Burke, Tho. Franklin, Art. Chamier, G. Colman, Wm. Varkell, J. Reynolds, W. Forbes, T. Barnard, R. B. Sheridan, P. Metcalfe, E. Gibbon.

181: 21. **Vita ordinanda.** I must lead an orderly and well regulated life. I must read my Bible. I must give my mind to the study of theology. I must serve (God) with a cheerful heart.

181: 28. **Miss Veronica's Scotch.** Veronica was the name of Boswell's daughter. "-ston" is the Scotch equivalent for "-son." Boswell replied that he had taught her to say "-son." This selection and those immediately following are from five letters to Boswell, 1777.

181: 32. **augment our club.** Johnson, Boswell says, did not care to consort intimately with those who differed with him on politics and religion.

182: 2. **Timeo Danaos.** This "classical quotation" has become so common that it has dropped from the "parole of literary men."

182: 25. **Poor Dodd.** Dodd had previously lost his position as Court Chaplain because he had offered a bribe of three thousand guineas to Lord Bathurst, the Great Seal, for the living of St. George's, Hanover Square. This Earl of Chesterfield was the fifth. Johnson's famous letter con-

cerning the dedication of the Dictionary was written to the fourth Earl. See p. 184.

190 : 6. landing at Icolmkill.

"'We are now treading that illustrious island, which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge and the blessings of religion. To abstract the mind from all local emotion would be impossible, if it were endeavoured, and would be foolish if it were possible. Whatever withdraws us from the power of our senses, whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future, predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings. Far from me, and from my friends, be such frigid philosophy, as may conduct us, indifferent and unmoved, over any ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery, or virtue. The man is little to be envied, whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona.' Had our tour produced nothing else but this sublime passage, the world must have acknowledged that it was not made in vain. Sir Joseph Banks, the present respectable President of the Royal Society, told me, he was so much struck on reading it, that he clasped his hands together, and remained for some time in an attitude of silent admiration." — BOSWELL.

191 : 20. his talk is of bullocks. Boswell's note is: "*Ecclesiasticus*, chap. xxxviii, v. 25. The whole chapter may be read as an admirable illustration of the superiority of cultivated minds over the gross and illiterate." How a great mind makes sport of dulness is shown in Johnson's letters to Mrs. Thrale: "I have seen the great bull, and very great he is. I have likewise seen his heir apparent who promises to enherit all the bulk and all the virtues of his sire. I have seen the man who offered a hundred guineas for the young bull, while he was yet little better than a calf. The great bull has no disease but age. I hope in time to be like the great bull; and hope you will be like him too, a hundred years hence. There has been a man here to-day to take a

farm. After some talk he went to see the bull, and said that he had seen a bigger. Do you think he is likely to get the farm? We hate the man that had seen a bigger bull."

202: 7. **since it first came out.** Plainly, for once, Dr. Johnson had not "stopped to count."

203: 4. **F.** Mowbray Morris has the following note:—

"The Club. Croker has found, from the books, that the members present were Johnson (president), Burke, Boswell, Dr. Fordyce, Gibbon, Reynolds, Lord Upper Ossory, and Sheridan. He has guessed at the initials, but in his own confession very vaguely. We may assume, however, that R. stands for Reynolds, F. for Fordyce, and E. for Edmund Burke."

207: 23. **freeman of Aberdeen.** To Dr. Johnson on the occasion of his visit had been granted the freedom of the city, a seat of the woollen industry.

212: 3. γηράσκειν To learn as one grows older.

214: 30. **freni strictio.** Tightening of the rein or bit.

219: 25. **hang out a helmet.** The helmet *had* been used in parts of Europe as the sign of an inn.

222: 3. **Veniam petimus.** We beg indulgence and we grant it in our turn.

222: 16. **Maccaronick verse.** "Swaggerer" comes near to the meaning of maccaroon. Cf. Yankee Doodle. Brewer, in the Handbook of Phrase and Fable, says that a club of maccaroons introduced Italian maccaroni at Almacks.

231: 1. **Vidit et erubuit.** The boy was Crawshaw, one of the minor poets. "The crystal water blushed when she saw the Master." "I tell a tale of wonder. The sun sank, but no night followed."

232: 37. **miror magis.** I feel more admiration than envy.

233: 32. **Psalmanazar.** He had "made himself public" by an autobiography in which he pretended to be a native of Formosa converted to Christianity. On the strength of this

story he got himself sent to Oxford by some zealots who hoped he would influence young men to go to Formosa as missionaries. Once at Oxford among noble traditions and gentle associates, he became converted in earnest. See Dr. Hill, III. App. A.

237: 6. **Lege solutus.** Saved by the law and carried on the shoulders of the multitude.

237: 19. **aux choux.** A "politician" even as to the most trivial and insignificant details.

239: 35. **Greek colony.** The controversy roused by Wolfe has not yet been terminated. Andrew Lang had little respect for the "critical sagacity" that would make all that is non-Homeric appear as post-Homeric. Homer was often writing, he thinks, of a No-man's land, and what is not Attic or not Ionic may be of Ægean tradition.

240: 17. **poetical prose.** What "faults" would Dr. Johnson have found in the work of Butcher and Lang, or of Professor Palmer?

241: 21. **talk of runts.** Dr. Johnson confessed to Mrs. Thrale his pleasure upon hearing some one say after a fox-hunt at Brighthelmstone, "Why, Johnson rides as well, for aught I see, as any illiterate fellow in England."

248: 9. **by seniority.** From its Aldermen.

248: 8. **Hummums:** public baths.

248: 31. **Milton and Locke.** While Milton defined "a complete and generous education as that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously all the offices, both public and private, of peace and war," yet the training was to come through the intellect rather than, as according to Locke's scheme, through the sympathies.

249: 31. **Poll.** Miss Carmichael.

250: 2. **Empress of Russia.** Catherine II, although, strictly speaking, not a connoisseur, nevertheless enjoyed

patronizing art and letters throughout Europe, and added enormously to the Russian imperial collections.

256 : 10. small experiments. Johnson had to be watched at Streatham lest he set the house on fire. His wig, usually burned down in front to the very netting, was so unfit for "company" that Mr. Thrale's valet kept a special one to be adjusted on the Doctor's head before his entrance to dinner or the drawing-room.

257 : 25. with great rapture. Cowper said that Pope was utterly deficient in a taste for Homer.

258 : 17. places of residence.

"(1) Exeter Street, off Catherine Street, Strand. (2) Greenwich. (3) Woodstock Street, near Hanover Square. (4) Castle Street, Cavendish Square, No. 6. (5) Strand. (6) Boswell Court. (7) Strand, again. (8) Bow Street. (9) Holborn. (10) Fetter Lane. (11) Holborn, again. (12) Gough Square. (13) Staple Inn. (14) Gray's Inn. (15) Inner Temple Lane, No. 1. (16) Johnson's Court, No. 7. (17) Bolt Court, No. 8." — BOSWELL.

261 : 7. Queeney. *Esther* Thrale.

266 : 31. The Sicilian Gossips. The 15th Idyl of Theocritus, translated by Matthew Arnold.

275 : 10. Saxon k. Boswell says: —

"I hope the authority of the great Master of our language will stop that curtailing innovation, by which we see *critic*, *public*, &c., frequently written instead of *critick*, *publick*, &c."

But as the k has rightfully no place in these and similar words derived from the Latin, there are two points against him.

284 : 32. Mr. Perkins.

"Mr. Perkins was for a number of years the worthy superintendent of Mr. Thrale's great brewery, and after his death became one of the Proprietors of it; and now resides in Mr. Thrale's house in Southwark, which was the scene of so many literary meetings, and

in which he continues the liberal hospitality for which it was eminent. Dr. Johnson esteemed him much. He hung up in the counting-house a fine proof of the admirable mezzotinto of Dr. Johnson, by Doughty; and when Mrs. Thrale asked him somewhat flippantly, 'Why do you put him up in the counting-house?' He answered, 'Because, Madam, I wish to have one wise man there.' 'Sir, (said Johnson), I thank you. It is a very handsome compliment, and I believe you speak sincerely.'" — BOSWELL.

286 : 3. dreams of avarice. In one of Dr. Johnson's "Letters to Mrs. Piozzi," he mentions a sum of £14,000 which the Thrales had just received. "If I had money enough, what would I do? Perhaps, if you and Master did not hold me, I might go to Cairo and down the Red Sea to Bengal, and take a ramble in India. Would this be better than building and planting? It would surely give more variety to the eye and more amplitude to the mind. Half fourteen thousand would send me out to see other forms of existence and bring me back to describe them."

287 : 25. preaching Mrs. Hall. A sister of the Wesleys.

289 : 36. perceiving the application. The House had expelled him; the law had reinstated him.

292 : 5. cui bono. non est tanti. What's the use? — literally, for whose good? It's not worth while.

292 : 14. Johnson and Shebbeare. Shebbeare was pilloried and pensioned within seven years. Boswell's note is: "I recollect a ludicrous paragraph in the newspapers, that the king had pensioned both a He-bear and a She-bear."

296 : 30. ministry is removed. In 1782, after Yorktown, North was succeeded by Rockingham, "out" since 1766.

298 : 28. To Boswell. Boswell's father had just died. The two had not lived in fondness. Boswell was in debt and alarmed over his wife's failing health. Johnson advised him to be kind to the old servants, to live without extravagance, but to "spare no expense that can preserve Mrs. Boswell."

299 : 31. Templo valedixi. Johnson's tenderness and gratitude toward the Thrales is everywhere apparent. When one of the three remaining daughters died, he wrote to Mrs. Thrale: "I loved her, for she was Thrale's and yours, and by her dear father's appointment, in some sort mine. . . . I love you all and therefore can not without regret see the phalanx broken and reflect that you and my other dear girls are deprived of one that was born your friend. To such friends everyone that has them has recourse at last when it is discovered — and discovered it seldom fails to be, that the fortuitous friendships of inclination or vanity are at the mercy of a thousand accidents."

303 : 33. Ingens Ingenium. A mighty intellect resides within this ungainly body.

306 : 7. to draw spectators. Yet, more than once when the Wesleys desired to talk in prison with the condemned who had asked to see them, permission was refused.

309 : 14. Somerset Place. "Mr. Lowe's performance," said to be a wretched piece of art, was hung in the gallery *on a wall by itself!*

311 : 23. extravagantly expensive. Walpole wrote indignantly: "It is confounding the immense space between pleasing talents and national services." The undertaker, *unpaid*, was ruined.

315 : 5. "Cecilia." Dr. Hill, IV. 258, has this note: "Macaulay maintained that Johnson had a hand in the composition of 'Cecilia.' He quoted a passage from it and said, — 'We say with confidence, either Sam Johnson or the Devil.' That he was wrong is shown by Mme. D'Arblay's Diary. 'Ay,' cried Dr. Johnson, 'some people want to make out some credit to me from the little rogue's book. . . . I never saw a word of it before it was printed.'"

317 : 5. The gout. He wrote to Mrs. Thrale: "I enjoy

all the dignity of lameness. I receive ladies and dismiss them sitting. *Painful preeminence.*"

323 : 20. **rough in conversation.** " What would you give," asked a pert fellow at a dinner, " to be as young and brisk as I am? " " I would be content to be almost as foolish." . . . When talking in one of the college halls, he was frequently interrupted by one of the masters with " I deny that." At last Johnson turned to him and said, " Sir, you have forgotten: '*Plus negabit unus asinus in una hora quam centum philosophi probaverint in centum annis.*' ". . . Another young gentleman asked him, " Dr. Johnson, would you advise me to marry? " " I would advise no one to marry," was the answer, " who is not likely to propagate understanding." Then, as if to make amends, he gave a most wonderful talk on marriage. It is plain that those who wished Johnson to talk would submit to almost any rebuffs if they hoped at last to " draw him out." Some one tried to excuse an inquisitive young man on the ground that doubtless he had come to be cured of his ignorance. " His ignorance," said Johnson, " is so deep that I am afraid to show him the bottom of it." He said to Mrs. Thrale: " It moves my indignation to be constantly applied to to speak well of a thing which I think contemptible." Dr. Hill quotes Sir Joshua Reynolds: " His obstinate silence whilst all the company were in raptures vying with each other who should pepper highest was considered rudeness and ill-nature." Lord Elibank said at the age of seventy that he would gladly travel five hundred miles for a single day in Dr. Johnson's company. " There had once been a pretty smart altercation," says Boswell, " between Dr. Barnard and him, upon a question, whether a man could improve himself after the age of forty-five; when Johnson, in a hasty humour, expressed himself in a manner not quite civil. Dr. Barnard made it the subject of a copy of

pleasant verses, in which he supposed himself to learn different perfections from different men. They concluded with delicate irony:—

> "'Johnson shall teach me how to place
> In fairest light each borrowed grace;
> From him I'll learn to write:
> Copy his clear familiar style,
> And by the roughness of his file
> Grow, like *himself, polite.*'"

328: 7. **Milton's poor Sonnets.** The eighteenth-century view.

329: 13. **mollia tempora fandi.** "The Latin may be made out from the English" *mollify* and *infant.*

333: 29. **congé d'elire.** The paradoxical command to dean and chapter to elect as their bishop one whose name had been decided upon by king or court.

339: 31. **Presto's supper.** The terrier once refused to yield his place on the hearth rug to Dr. Johnson. "Presto," said the Dictator, "you will soon be as lazy a dog as I am."

340: 12. **the air balloon.** There was a furore, then, as now, over the conquest of the air.

341: 15. **dinner was publick.** Any one sociably "possible" might present himself without invitation.

341: 31. **expiatory.** Johnson went on the fiftieth anniversary of his disobedience.

345: 28. **Te teneam moriens.** My dying hand clings to thine. Langton had taken lodgings in the neighborhood so as to be at Johnson's call in the last hours.

347: 26. **renowned edifice.** The funeral services were so simple — without music — that Sir John Hawkins, the executor, came in for much criticism. Dean Stanley calls attention to the fact that not many feet distant from Dr. Johnson lies his arch-adversary, Macpherson.

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